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REV. MR. WARD'S DISCOURSE

BEFORE THE

PALESTINE MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

JUNE 16, 1841.

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PREPARATION FOR THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

A

DISCOURSE,

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DELIVERED AT THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE

PALESTINE MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

AT

HANOVER, MASS.,

June 16, 1841.

BY JAMES W. WARD,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CHURCH, ABINGTON.

BOSTON:

PRESS OF T. R. MARVIN, 24 CONGRESS STREET.

1841.

DISCOURSE.

2 Peter iii. 9.

THE LORD IS NOT SLACK CONCERNING HIS PROMISE.

The Apostles seem to have entertained an influential belief in a coming day of general judgment. From tradition, from the book of Enoch, from the Old Testament records, and from the immediate instructions of Christ himself, they gathered the confident persuasion that the Lord would come with ten thousand of his saints to renovate the earth by fire, to be glorified in his friends, and to execute judgment on his enemies. But the doctrine of a judgment to come, when proclaimed by the Apostles, like the other fundamental doctrines of the gospel, found many determined opposers. In the spirit of infidel philosophy they asked, 'Where is the promise of his coming? We see no signs of his approach. The earth bears no marks of decay. Generations appear and disappear. The sun rises and sets. Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.' To all which the decisive reply is made, 'The Lord is not slack concerning his promise. He is indeed long-suffering. But the day will come as a thief in the night.'

The chief design of the judgment day is to vindicate the character of God in the sight of all his subjects. It

is not merely for the comparatively insignificant purpose of passing and executing sentence on the inhabitants of the earth. Probably this is, in a measure, done at the death of every individual. But the day is designed for a far more important end; namely—to convince sinners of all their hard speeches against God—to wipe away every charge which a wicked world has brought against him—and make his character shine forth before the universe pure and resplendent as the midday sun. Now for such a day of trial a great preparation must be made. And much time will be needed for making it. It is so, in important cases, in human courts. And should it be said of any distinguished individual whose character was impeached, and who had promised to defend it at an earthly tribunal, but who seemed to be slow in bringing the case to trial, that "he was not slack concerning his promise," this language would surely imply that he was actively busy in making preparation for the trial. And this language must signify the same when applied to God. From the text then this sentiment is deducible—*God is making preparation as fast as possible for the judgment day.* Unworthy imputations have been cast upon his character. He knows his innocence and is actively engaged in preparing to prove it. And when he has collected the necessary evidence, the trial will commence without delay.

I shall now attempt to show,

I. *That the preparation to be made requires time.*

II. *That God, apparently, is, as fast as possible, making this preparation.*

I. The preparation to be made requires time. This will be sufficiently obvious if we only direct our attention for a moment to some of the points to sustain which evidence must be provided. We will consider them under two general heads.

1. God did men no injustice in putting them into a state of probation. Wicked men often complain of God for bringing them into existence. They wish—and sometimes even express the wish—that they had never been born. They charge God with injustice in creating men without their consent—and that too, when he foresaw that multitudes of them would be miserable forever. Now this charge must be met and fully refuted. And in order to do it fairly and clearly, the following points must be proved.

(1.) The law under which men are placed, is adapted, in the best possible manner, to promote the welfare of God's moral kingdom. (2.) This law is level to the capacities of men. It can be obeyed. (3.) The sanctions of the law are perfectly equitable. (4.) Existence, improved as it might be, is better to men than non-existence. Let these points be proved, and the conduct of God in creating men and putting them under his law, instead of appearing unjust, will be seen to resemble that of a kind father who gives his child an estate which he may indeed pervert to his serious injury, but which he may also make the means of greatly enhancing his happiness. No child in his senses would reject the boon because it was possible for him to convert it into an instrument of evil. No parent would, on that ground, be charged with injustice to his child for bestowing it.

2. The second general point to be proved is, that the system which God has adopted will on the whole produce more good than evil. Though it should be shown that God has done men no injustice, that in giving them an accountable existence he has bestowed on them an invaluable favor, yet, if it should appear that, after all, the general system will issue in more evil than good, the disclosure would clearly indicate a lack of wisdom or goodness in its originator. If he did not know that the result would be so unfavorable, then, his character for

wisdom is injured. If he did know it, and yet voluntarily adopted a system which he clearly saw would eventuate in more evil than good, then his benevolence is tarnished. If then he would fully vindicate his character, he must make it evident that his system will produce more good than evil. The demonstration would be complete if this good accrued only to God. But as men are naturally selfish — seeking only their own — it would certainly seem desirable for him to show that more good than evil will result from the system even to them. And this doubtless will be made manifest at the judgment day, and so God's conduct all appear perfectly right. If he shows 1st, that he has done men no injustice, but rather a distinguished favor in giving them existence under his government; and 2dly, that his system will produce more good than evil, and that even to men themselves, his character will appear resplendently glorious in every eye, and every *conscience* in the universe if *not* every heart will be ready to join in the hosanna, "the Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works."

Now the evidence to sustain these points can, manifestly, be obtained only by giving the system a full and fair opportunity for developing its natural tendencies and actual results. And this will necessarily demand no trifling period of time. The preparation for the judgment day then requires time.

II. God apparently is, as fast as possible, making this preparation. He is rapidly collecting the necessary evidence, and getting ready for the great day. This will appear from these two facts.

1. The providenee of God is continually developing more and more of the evidence required. It is fast affording proof,

(1.) That the law of God is adapted to secure the highest welfare of men. This proof must necessarily be

gathered from the face of society—from the manifestations that are made of the consequences of obedience and disobedience to the law. Every saint and every sinner, every Christian and every pagan community, is continually adding to the aggregate of this evidence. The fairest and fullest proof of the unrivalled excellence of the law must be obtained from a contrast of the character and condition—the holiness and happiness of those who obey it; with the character and condition—the guilt and wretchedness of those who disobey it. But such a contrast the earth has never afforded. We can find individuals enough, we can find communities enough, that are mainly if not wholly under the control of the selfish principle. And we can find individuals and communities partially and feebly influenced by the principle of love. But a comparison of the wholly selfish with the partially selfish, will afford no fair demonstration of the worth of the principle of love—that love which is the fulfilling of the law. And this earth has never yet witnessed the spectacle of a nation, a tribe, or an individual even—a mere man—wholly obedient to the law of God, and crowned with all the rich fruits of obedience. But, to fill up the proof of the perfect character of the law, we need the exhibition of a nation, or rather of a world, wholly subject to that law, and perfectly blessed under its happy dominion. Such a nation, such a world, God needs, to furnish the evidence of the perfection of the law he has given to men, and of the rectitude of his conduct in giving it. Such a nation, such a world, he calls upon his church, to whom he has condescended to intrust his honor among men—such a world, he calls upon his church, as he exhibits before her his character all tarnished by the base aspersions of wicked men, to give him, that with it he may wipe those vile aspersions all away. And when she feels enough for the honor of her King to put forth all her energies and furnish such a world, he will be able, not only to point at

the earth as it was before the birth of Christ, or before the deluge, when all flesh had corrupted their way, and say, 'Behold in this mighty mass of corruption and wo, the sad effects of disobedience to my law;' but to point also at a redeemed world, basking in the sunlight of love, and thrilled with all the joys of an earthly paradise, and say, 'See there the benign influences of the law I imposed on men.' And not an individual could witness the contrast without being constrained to exclaim, 'The law is, indeed, holy, just, and good.'

(2.) The providence of God is developing the evidence that the law can be obeyed. Mankind are required to act, and required too to act *right*, in an almost endless variety of circumstances. Some of these circumstances they themselves make, and are of course the only beings responsible for them. But some of them God ordains; I mean *directly*, for, *in a certain sense*, he ordains all things. And wicked men often raise the complaint that, in their circumstances, they cannot obey the law. Now as mankind multiply on the earth, and as generation succeeds generation, the circumstances of many different individuals, in as far they are directly ordered by God, will come to be very nearly the same. Could we bring together all the human beings that have ever lived, or will ever live on the earth, we might select any individual of the mass, and we should then, probably, be able to find another, if not many others, in the vast assembly, so closely resembling him in his physical make, in the features of his countenance, and the general form and appearance of his body, that no human sagacity could distinguish between the two. And the same would doubtless hold true of those circumstances that influence human conduct, in which mankind are placed by God. And if one of those thus placed in similar circumstances repents, returns to obedience and finds life, he will afford the evidence that all who were circumstanced like him, might have

done the same. And probably this evidence will, in the process of ages, all come out. At any rate, some whose circumstances were the most unfavorable for obeying the law, will be brought to obedience, and thus render it manifest that others, in their more favorable condition, might have kept the law. All this evidence the providence of God is fast preparing. Individuals of every rank in society, and every condition in life, are led to obey the truth. They are needed from every island of the sea, from every nation and every province of the earth. And they will be had, when those whom God has kindly constituted the depositaries of his truth, and the almoners of his gospel to the destitute, shall, as in duty bound, fulfil their trust, and send the light of truth to every darkened portion of the globe.

(3.) The providence of God is furnishing the proof that the penalty of the law is equitable, and ought to be executed on the transgressor. The main complaint brought against the penalty is, that it is unreasonably severe. The cause of this complaint is unquestionably to be found in the fact, that the consequences of a life of sin are seldom collectively contemplated. They commence with an individual, who dies and is forgotten. They extend over a wider and wider surface—they roll down successive generations, and, wherever they come, they are thorns in the flesh, and fires in the heart; but they are seen, when seen at all, only in minute portions, in fractional parts, dissevered from their originating cause. After centuries have passed away, could the aggregate of evil which that sinner who now rests in oblivion has occasioned the world, be seen at one view, and connected with its author, almost every beholder would be ready to admit that so great an offender deserved to suffer the penalty of the law. And God, in his providence, does sometimes fasten the consequences of a man's sins so indissolubly to his name, that they are seen through every passing generation to belong

to him. Take, as an example, the founder of the religion of the Koran. What a mass of human suffering he has produced! His religion, in its infancy, was baptized in human gore. And the blood and flesh of men was for years, and centuries even, its only nutriment. And, as was to be expected, it sensualized—brutalized all who received it. Now the tears, and groans, and blood of the thousands that perished in opposing its progress, and the mental and moral degradation of the millions, occupying some of the choicest portions of the globe, who have received it, are all indissolubly linked with the name of Mohammed. And they point him out as a monster, on whom the full penalty of the law ought perhaps to be executed. But his guilt is yet to be far more distinctly seen. It cannot be realized till the fair and populous regions over which, for so many centuries, he has shed the blasting mildew of his religion, shall enjoy the full blessings of a pure Christianity. When Palestine societies and Missionary societies shall pour truth enough into Mohammedan lands to expose the delusions of the false prophet, convert the multitudes of his followers into holy and happy disciples of Jesus, and transform the lands which are now habitations of cruelty into abodes of bliss, then the enormous evils of this imposture will be somewhat clearly perceived, and it will be deeply felt that, to diminish aught from the penalty of eternal death which was designed to prevent such enormous evils, though it might be kindness to the offender, would still be cruelty to the world.

(4.) God is, through his providence, furnishing the evidence that in giving existence to men, he gave them a valuable inheritance. Every individual who lives happily and dies with a sure hope of heaven, is, on this point, an important witness for God. But while the world remains covered with so much sin and wo, even the best men sharing largely in them, the full value of the gift of

life cannot be shown. We must see men from their earliest years, through the whole course of life, perfect in holiness, and partaking only of the fruits of perfect holiness, and gently passing at life's close to the mansions of heavenly rest, and then follow them in imagination down the pathway of a blissful eternity, and we shall have some faint conceptions of the value of existence. We must see the whole world thus pure and happy, and we shall feel that to all the inhabitants of the earth in every period of time, life might have been made a priceless gift.

(5.) God is, in his providence, collecting the evidence that his system will ultimately accomplish more good than evil. This evidence must be derived from the atonement of Christ, and from the multitudes who will be finally redeemed. But the atonement has been already effected, and effected at the right time. Centuries were required to prepare for the coming of Christ, but in fullness of time he came. He appeared when his appearance would accomplish the most good, when systems of pagan religion had been tried and found insufficient, and when the world was in comparative readiness for the reception of his gospel. And now, to fill up the proof of the ultimate glorious results of the system, and the benevolence of its originator, nothing is needed, but to spread the triumphs of the gospel, and multiply the number of those who shall share in a blessed immortality. And this work is rapidly advancing. The heart and the honor of God are involved in it, and all the energies of his moral government are employed to forward it. His church is the instrument through which he works. Not the shadow of a reason exists for supposing that he will ever employ any other instrumentality than her voluntary agency in effecting the work. But he will condescend to be the leader of his host. He will go before her in a pillar of cloud and fire, and direct her way. And if she slothfully or cowardly

refuses to follow, as time and again she has done, he will leave her to sit, perhaps for centuries, solitary in the dust, covered with shame and sorrow. When the first heralds of the gospel were sent forth from Jerusalem, he guided their course, and led them on from victory to victory, till the standard of the cross waved triumphantly over the wide Roman empire. And then the pillar of cloud and fire moved on, and rested over distant pagan lands. And the church saw it there. Then was the time for her to have subdued the world to Christ. God had given her power—he had given her character—he had put into her hands the wealth of the broadest empire that ever flourished on the face of the globe, and she ought to have sent the gospel to the utmost boundaries of the earth, and ushered in the promised millennial morn. It was the fit time for such an effort. All the human means necessary for the accomplishment of the work were at her disposal. And, with the blessing of God, which always descends free as the rains and dews of heaven, she might have achieved a complete victory over Satan, and redeemed the world to God. But, flushed with her success, and proud of her exploits, she ignobly determined to rest awhile upon her arms, and enjoy her conquests. And, as might have been foreseen, she soon became enervated and diseased. Clouds gathered around her, and then a long night settled down upon her of far denser darkness than that which once sent terror through the hearts of the worshippers of the Nile. The sufferings which she endured in that long dark night were, centuries before, faintly typified in the painful discipline which, for forty years, the ancient Israelites underwent in the desert of Arabia, because they refused, at the appointed time, to subjugate and possess the promised land of Canaan. But that dismal night, though it passed slowly, yet it passed at length away. As soon as the church was sufficiently punished for her disobedience ; as soon as she manifested

a willingness again to labor and suffer for the spread of the truth, the thick clouds that hung over her began to be dissipated, and stars were seen glimmering in the firmament. The early reformers—the harbingers of the morning—appeared and shed light in upon the thick darkness of the night. The day soon dawned—sunshine glittered on the mountain tops, and the sun himself, though indeed red like blood, appeared in the horizon. His bloody hue, however, soon wore away, and he moved steadily up the heavens, and is now shedding his pure light on some of the fairest nations of the globe. *Again*, God has given power and character and wealth to his church. He has given her more even than she possessed in the days of Constantine. Look only at Britain, and our own country. These nations are professedly Christian. And in these countries, an amount of true Christian influence exists, sufficient, if exerted and rightly directed, to control all the power and wealth of these nations. And this wealth and power are almost limitless. Millions on millions of money are, moreover, now in the coffers of the church, which she holds in her own right and name. Her own members have, in their hands, the written title to it. And the combined influence which she might, directly and through her civil governments, exert on the unevangelized nations of the earth, is beyond computation. God has thus given her the means to abolish at once every grand delusive religion on the globe ; and now, to do it, she has only to say, "it *shall* be done," and act accordingly. God calls her to the work. The pillar of cloud and fire rest now over Mohammedan and pagan lands. It is plainly visible. You may see the bloody crescent which once proudly demanded obeisance of the cross, now crouching at her foot, and humbly begging that she would save her from being torn in pieces by the sacrilegious hands of her own son. And she receives with gratitude the boon of another day of dishonorable life. You may see almost all Eastern

India gazing up at the Christian religion as the superior religion of her civil master. You may see the inhabitants of the Celestial Empire, whose arrogant self-importance and pride have done more to shut out the light of civilization and Christianity from their borders, than their impregnable wall has to repel foreign invasion, trembling before a Christian nation, and ready to receive at her hand almost any conditions of peace. And you may see nearly all the systems of false religion in the world bending under the weight of infirmities and years, and sinking silently into their graves. Their devotees are already asking for something more pure and rational to satisfy their spiritual wants, and feeling after the Christian's God. The church has scarcely anything else to do than send them the true religion to take the place of those delusions that are now just ready to vanish away. And God is urgently pressing her up to this work. He has given her the means, and is presenting before her every motive that can possibly influence a Christian heart, and calling upon her to do the work. The hosts of heaven and hell are looking anxiously on to witness the result. If she takes hold of the enterprise with an unrelaxing grasp, and an unyielding energy, she will accomplish it. The earth will be swept clean of its superstitions and pollutions; every nation, every tribe, and every soul will offer pure incense on the altars of Jehovah, and heaven will sing the song of jubilee over a ransomed world. But if she selfishly, supinely refuses to do the work, then, judging from the analogy of God's past dealings with her, she may look for a season of tribulation darker and more replete with horror than any she has ever yet experienced. A night will come down upon her to which in duration, darkness, and despair, her past history affords no parallel. And, oh! can the church now consent to draw down such a dire punishment upon her head? Can she consent to entail such a dark night of sorrow on generations yet

unborn? Can she consent to see the honor of her king, which, if she would now do her duty, might soon shine in spotless splendor through the world, covered for centuries yet to come, with shame and sackcloth? Beloved! we are persuaded better things, though we thus speak.

We have now seen, from what God is doing in his providence, that he is hastening the preparation for the vindication of his honor at the general judgment. The evidence he needs is unfolding itself day by day. Every true conversion, every revival of religion, and every tract, every Bible and every missionary sent on an errand of mercy to heathen lands, goes to fill up the demonstration of the excellency of his system and the loveliness of his character. He needs only the fruits of the millennium to render the demonstration complete. And having examined the book of providence, if we turn now,

2. To the book of revelation, we shall learn that the lacking evidence is ere long to be forthcoming. In this volume of truth we find the assurance that this earth—so long darkened with human guilt and wo—shall yet be transformed into an Eden, luxuriantly covered with all the bloom and bliss of holiness. The harp of prophecy foretells such a day—a day whose sun will for ages stand still in the height of heaven, and go down and again bring the twilight, only because the earth shall then have accomplished her work for God, and fulfilled her destiny. The eye of faith looks down the vista of coming years and beholds the regenerated earth rejoicing in the full glories of this promised day.

> "Oh scene surpassing fable, and yet true,
> Scene of accomplished bliss! which who can see,
> Though but in distant prospect, and not feel
> His heart dilate with foretaste of the joy?"

Even now the light seems to be dimly purpling the East and foretokening the day. If Christendom wakes up and

watches and prays for the morning, it will soon break in all its effulgence upon her. But if she sluggishly says, 'A little more sleep, God in his own time will accomplish the work and vindicate his name,' then though angels may long weep for a scourged church, a groaning world, and a dishonored God, yet a generation shall arise (for God has said it) which will claim and take the toil and honor of bringing in the glorious day. And when the millions on millions of redeemed souls—the fruits of that blessed day—shall be gathered into the garner of God, then the proof of the matchless excellence of his system will be full. According to the sober arithmetical computation of the logical Dr. Bellamy, if the millennium continues only for a thousand literal years, so populous, during that period, may the earth be, with no war or sin or wo to waste it, that the whole number of those who will then be brought to heaven will be to the number of those who previously perished in the ratio of seventeen thousand to one. And should this calculation (which is certainly no extravagant one) be realized, and the universe at length witness only one guilty rebel from earth shut up in prison, to seventeen thousand saints exulting in all the ecstacies of heaven, (a ratio far less than that of the prisoners under any well constituted human government,) every soul would feel in its inmost depths that the system of Jehovah was indeed a benevolent system. Its evils, even to the race of man, awful as they might be, would still seem but a trifle when contrasted with its benefits. And the character of its originator would shine in brilliant lustre before every eye. Thus the honor of God at the general judgment demands a millennial day for the world. This is no conjecture, but sober truth, attested by God himself, who assures us that for his glory he will bring in that day. For hastening it on he is now calling into use the various instrumentalities through which he always works. His church—his chief agent—he is pressing into

the service. His honor calls and she must and she will bring in that day of joy to the earth and praise to its Maker. And as the happy years of millennial peace roll on, he will gather witnesses enough of the perfection of his government and character into his heavenly courts, and then the judgment will be no longer delayed. He will take the throne, and with overwhelming proof convince the ungodly of all their hard speeches against him, and make his character shine ineffably radiant before the congregated universe.

On an occasion like this, when you are assembled to combine your energies for the spread of the gospel, I might well have pointed you to a suffering, dying world, and drawn thence imperious motives for fresh zeal and activity in your holy enterprise. But as appeals, on this ground, have been made to Christian sympathy—till sympathy itself (how sad the thought!) seems nearly exhausted—I have thought that it might be good to come back and contemplate again a higher and nobler motive—one that includes every other that can influence a pious heart—I mean, the glory of God. Of course I refer not to that glory which consists in his inherent attributes, and which no power can possibly augment or diminish; but to that glory which is resolvable into the good opinion his intelligent creatures form of his character, and which every subject of his government is able and bound to promote. This motive he himself presents before you. He calls upon you, *for the honor of his name*, to spread the gospel through the earth. He points to the charges which the wicked have brought against his character, and says, 'Friends of my cause, that feel for my honor, that love my name, join with me in evangelizing the world and covering it with holiness, that the falsity of these charges may be exposed, and my name be glorious in every eye.' Is there nothing, in a motive so high, to enlist your zeal

and animate your exertions? Care you nothing for the honor of your King? Can you leave him to work without you in this enterprise so near his heart? He needs, he demands your co-operation. His language is, "Come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty." Will you embark heartily in the cause? Will you make sacrifices to advance it? Do you say you are already doing more in this work than most other churches in our country or in Christendom? As the descendants of the Pilgrims, who to honor God exchanged the wealth and luxuries and endearments of their native land for lives of poverty and toil in a dreary wilderness, you are privileged and prompted to do more for this cause than any other churches on the face of the globe. And do you now offer it as an excuse for not doing your full duty, that other churches do not do theirs? Why, the fact of their remissness, instead of being an excuse for *diminishing*, ought to be a reason for *increasing* your efforts. If, when a building is being reared, some who pretend to help it, put to it only a slack and careless hand, those whose hearts are in the work, must be stimulated to more strenuous exertions. If, when a person's character is impeached, some of his friends forsake or but feebly defend him, those who remain steadfast must do the more for his honor. Do you say you are already doing much, very much for this cause? But how much? Do you make as great sacrifices and exertions as you would for the defence of your own character at an earthly tribunal? I know you have not wholly neglected your duty. I wish I could say, 'You have nobly and fully done it.' But truth and arithmetic forbid. The churches composing this Palestine Missionary Society contain twenty-three hundred and fifty communicants, and yet the largest amount ever received, for a single year, into your treasury, is only eighteen hundred and seventy-six dollars and sixty cents—giving an average of not eighty cents a year for each communicant. And

if we deduct what is contributed by non-communicants, the average would not exceed sixty cents. And is sixty cents a year the measure of your ability to aid the missionary enterprise? Is sixty cents a year the measure of your interest in this cause? Is sixty cents a year the measure of the value you put upon the gospel of Christ? Is sixty cents a year the measure of your sympathy with the dying heathen? Is sixty cents a year the measure of your regard for the honor of the King of Heaven? Do you say, 'Why, I have given more, much more than sixty cents a year to this cause?' Then others have given less. And it is your happy privilege to fill up what is lacking in their service. Perhaps God has given you ample ability to do it. And yet you have filled it up only to the measure of sixty cents a year. Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. If you felt for the honor of your God as your revolutionary sires felt for the honor of their country, instead of a sum so paltry, you would now, in the sight of heaven, devote to this cause on the altar of your faith, your sons and your daughters, your lives and your fortunes. But if what you have already given is to be the maximum of your contributions to this cause—if it is to be the maximum of the contributions of the entire church of Christ—then Satan will still continue to triumph over the nations, the radiant glories of the King of heaven yet longer remain clouded, and the fond hope of the speedy redemption of the world expire in night.

ANNUAL MEETING.

The Palestine Missionary Society held its Twenty-first Anniversary at Hanover, June 16, 1841. Rev. Daniel Thomas, the President, in the chair. A sermon from 2 Peter, iii. 9, was preached by Rev. J. W. Ward. A communication from Rev. Daniel Temple to the Society was read by the Secretary. The Treasurer's Report was read and accepted. The Society was addressed by Dr. Chapin, lately from the Sandwich Islands; and a collection was taken in aid of the Society's funds. Rev. W. Pierce was chosen to preach the next annual sermon, and the First Parish in North Bridgewater was designated as the place of meeting. Thanks were voted to Rev. Mr. Ward for his able and appropriate sermon—to Rev. Mr. Duncan and his Society for their Christian hospitality—and to the choir of singers for their acceptable services on the occasion.

The following officers were chosen for the current year.

Rev. DANIEL THOMAS, *President.*
Dea. MORTON EDDY, } *Vice Presidents.*
Mr. JOSIAH KINGMAN, }
Rev. JONAS PERKINS, *Secretary.*
EBENEZER ALDEN, M. D., *Treasurer.*
SILAS PAINE, Esq., *Auditor.*

LETTER FROM MR. TEMPLE.

SMYRNA, *January* 26, 1841.

To the Palestine Missionary Society:

BELOVED BRETHREN AND FRIENDS,—This day commemorates the martyrdom on this spot of the aged and venerable Polycarp, the angel of the ancient church of Smyrna. Many in this city have observed the day in honor of the saint. A sermon has been preached by a Roman Catholic priest, recounting the good deeds of the pious martyr, and closing with an earnest invocation addressed to the saint, entreating that his aid and protection may be still extended to this city, the place where he labored and laid down his life in martyrdom. Thus time moves on. The return of this anniversary reminds the people of the departed saint, and calls forth their invocations to him, but does not direct them to the One Mediator between God and man, who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification, and ever lives at the Father's right hand to make intercession for us.

Another year has vanished since I had the happiness to address you—a year too, like the preceding, memorable in Turkey for the great events that have happened in this empire. It is not my happiness to report to you the conversion of a multitude to our adorable Saviour, but it is my happiness to inform you that the arm of the oppressor seems to be broken, and that the oppressed, who formerly were constrained to say, *I looked on the right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me, refuge failed me, no man cared for my soul*, now find a refuge and a protection in the government. The ecclesiastical authorities are now, by the new code of laws, placed throughout the empire in a position so unlike their former one, and their power is so much abridged, that it must be difficult, if not impossible, for them in future to urge forward any successful persecution against such as they may choose to brand as heretics. This opens a new and wide door to the friends of Evangelical truth to prosecute their benevolent plans in this empire of the false prophet.

As for the Turks, there is, as yet, no free access to them; but the rapid and irresistible course of events encourages the hope that the period will soon arrive, when they will risk little in listening to the gospel. Every year furnishes new proofs that the baseless fabric of their faith is fast

crumbling into ruins. This they themselves both feel and acknowledge, especially the old men who still cherish a strong attachment to Islamism. A superficial observer can scarcely fail to see in the signs of the times in Turkey many indications that the hour is fast approaching when Jerusalem shall cease to be trodden down by the gentiles. It is not indeed our privilege to know with certainty, as Daniel and his captive brethren anciently did at Babylon, the number of the years which the Lord will accomplish in the desolations of Jerusalem and the promised land; but still we are favored with broad intimations to encourage our hopes of a speedy accomplishment. Happy will it be for us, if, like that devout prophet, we all set our faces unto the Lord to seek this blessing by prayer and supplications, with humble confessions of our sins, and with many tears, beseeching him to hearken, and do, and defer not, for his name's sake.

It is very affecting to the heart of a devout Christian, who knows and feels the comfort and edification of having the blessed Bible in his own tongue, to look upon the many thousands called Christians in this country, in all the Oriental churches, indeed, who only hear the word of God read in a foreign tongue, but do not, and cannot understand it. Our blessed Lord informs us that when any one hears the word of the kingdom, but does not *understand* it, then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which was sown, so that it *brings forth no fruit.* This has been precisely the state of all these churches for many ages past, and would be so, for ages to come, probably, if no aid should come to them from abroad, for among all the sons whom they have brought up, there is none to take them by the hand and show them a more excellent way. The god of this world loves to have it so. For this reason he has stirred up persecution against all who have in any way attempted to diffuse biblical knowledge among the people, either by the preaching of the gospel, or by the distribution of the holy Scriptures. This good work, however, is still going on, though opposed at every step by the ruler of the darkness of this world.

I look forward with joy at the prospect of better days. I trust the Lord is in his good providence preparing a feast of fat things for the people of these countries. He is certainly, in a remarkable manner, by various instruments, destroying the face of the covering cast for so long a time over the people, and the veil that has been spread over the nations. The time, I doubt not, is at hand, when many thousands will say, Oh Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us; but they are *dead,* and shall not live, they are *deceased,* and shall not rise again, for thou hast visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish!

How precious, how sacred is the privilege of aiding in any way the cause of our Saviour on earth, of sending ambassadors in his name to our fellow men, who are in darkness, that they may receive their sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost! Angels might covet, but they have never enjoyed this privilege. Who would not most joyfully contribute his aid to establish and extend our Saviour's kingdom of peace and truth and righteousness throughout all the earth? All other kingdoms will soon vanish away, but this will stand for ever and ever.

It was consoling and encouraging to me to observe in your last Report how much your Society has contributed for this purpose during the nineteen years of its existence. Not one of its members will be visited, I feel assured, by any feeling of regret on his dying bed for having done so much. Then, probably, we shall all have too much reason to regret that we had not more cheerfully and entirely consecrated our substance, ourselves, our all to His service and to Him, who gave himself for us.

May we not regard the stupendous events following each other in such rapid succession in this country, the drying up of the symbolical Euphrates, the introduction of a rational code of laws, the wonder-working agency of steam, bringing the extremities of the empire into near neighborhood and easy communication, and the withering, palsied arm of Mohammedan despotism, as an index on the dial of time announcing that the end of all things seen in the prophetic and Apocalyptic visions is at hand? I cannot but regard them in this light. Those things are certainly coming to pass on the earth, and especially in this part of it, which should make the church lift up her head and rejoice in the hope that her redemption is drawing nigh.

Let us not faint or grow weary. Let us cheer ourselves with the inspiring hope that the seed we sow will bring forth fruit unto eternal life. Think how precious in the sight of God and of the holy angels is the soul of man. For its redemption God spared not his only begotten Son, but sent him to be the Saviour of the world. When the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and all the redeemed shall rise from their long sleep in the dust of the earth, and shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of our Father, shall we not then regard ourselves as among the most favored of the children of God, if we may remember that in his infinite mercy he allowed us to enjoy the privilege of being the instruments by which any of them attained to the inheritance of saints in light, to the eternal blessedness of heaven?

Great will be the reward in heaven of all those, who, influenced by a genuine love to our only Saviour, Jesus Christ, have denied themselves and borne the cross for his sake and for the salvation of men, using the talents and treasures entrusted to them as good stewards, remembering the account they are soon to render to the Lord who redeemed them with his blood. May this reward of grace be given to us when the Lord shall reward every man according to his works.

I remain, beloved brethren and friends, most truly yours,

D. TEMPLE.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

Receipts from June 17, 1840, *to June* 16, 1841.

Collection at Annual Meeting, 1840,	$ 36 85
Abington, First Parish, Mon. Con. $69 55; Ladies, $53,	122 55
" South Parish, Gent. $42; La. $22 50; Mon. Con. $13, Friend, $10,	87 50
" East Parish, Gent. $21 25; La. $20,	41 25
" North Parish, Mon. Con.,	21 00
Braintree, First Parish, La. $68 70; Mon. Con. $38,	106 70
" South Parish, Gent. and La. $26 72; Mon. Con. $15,	41 72
Bridgewater, Trin. Cong. Soc., Gent. & La. $10 75; Mon. $18 25,	29 00
Cohasset, Gent. and La.	13 41
East and *West Bridgewater*, Evang. Soc., La. $10; L. Keith, 50 cts.; Mon Con. $32 05,	42 55
Easton, Gent. & La. $38 12; I. Keith, $10; Mon. Con. $20; L. Drake, $30,	98 12
Hanover, Gent. $7; La. $10; Mon. Con. $15,	32 00
Hanson, Gent. and La. $15 56; Mon. Con. $11 44,	27 00
North Bridgewater, First Parish, I. Packard's Estate, $2 50; Gent. $66 24; Mon. Con. $3 25,	71 99
" South Parish, Gent. $10 07; La. $11 02; Fem. Benev. Soc. $12 50; do. $8 67; Mon. Con. $8 24,	50 50
Randolph, First Parish, Gent. $72 56; La. $35 80; Fem. Benev. Soc. $15; Mon. Con. $51 46,	174 82
" East Parish, S. S. Class, $1; Mon. Con. $18 91; La. $20,	39 91
Weymouth, South Parish, Fem. Praying Soc. $18; Mater. Assoc. $2; Mon. Con. $16,	36 00
" North Parish, Sab. School, $8 80; C. Holbrook, $5; Mo. Con. $28,	41 80
Weymouth and Braintree Union Society, Neighborhood Mon. Con. $40 33; do. $35 23; Gent. and La. pt. $18 50; Mon. Con. $26 91,	120 97
Friend in Norfolk Co.	50 00
	$1,285 64

EBENEZER ALDEN, TREASURER.

NOTE.—The whole amount collected since the formation of the Society, is $24,236 29.

I have examined the accounts of the Treasurer of the Palestine Missionary Society, and found them rightly cast and duly vouched.

SILAS PAINE, AUDITOR.

JUNE 16, 1841.

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REV. MR. PIERCE'S DISCOURSE

BEFORE THE

PALESTINE MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

JUNE 15, 1842.

2

A

DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED AT THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE

7533.3

PALESTINE MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

AT

NORTH BRIDGEWATER, MASS., FIRST PARISH,

JUNE 15, 1842.

BY REV. WILLARD PIERCE,
Pastor of the North Church, Abington.

BOSTON:
PRESS OF T. R. MARVIN, 24 CONGRESS STREET.
1842.

DISCOURSE.

1 Kings xvii. 13.

BUT MAKE ME THEREOF A LITTLE CAKE FIRST, AND BRING IT UNTO ME, AND AFTER, MAKE FOR THEE AND FOR THY SON.

This was spoken by the prophet Elijah, to the widow woman of Zarephath. In consequence of the wickedness of the rulers in Israel, God brought great distress upon the whole country. He withheld from the land all rain and dew, for the space of three years and six months. The result of this was a severe famine; so that that country which was naturally so fertile as to be called a land flowing with milk and honey, yielded little to sustain its population:—nothing but what could be found in vales near rivers, where there were some patches of verdure, and scanty vegetation. As might be expected, the old stocks of provisions, laid up in former years, were well nigh exhausted; and when they were so, the people looked for death, by one general sweep of starvation. Many *had* famished, and those who survived, and were in the best circumstances, were about cooking their last meal, such as it was.

This seems to have been the point of distress to which this widow woman was reduced. She had only a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse, and she was about gathering a few sticks to cook it, that she and her son might eat it and then die.

To this woman, it seems, and in *this condition*, the prophet Elijah, who had been hid up all this time and fed by ravens, was sent by the Lord's direction to board. 'And the word of the Lord came to Elijah, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. And so he arose and went to Zarephath, and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there, gathering of sticks; and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse; and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go, and do as thou hast said; but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after, make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth. And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah; and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah.' At first, it seemed hard in her straitened condition, and that of her little son, that she should be called upon to give *any* part of her handful of meal; and still more that she must make him a cake *first*, and which, to her view, must take nearly all the meal in the barrel. But she was called upon to make this sacrifice in a good cause. Elijah was engaged in the cause of God, and this pious woman was called upon to make a sacrifice for it; and to make one *adequate* to the exigency of the case.

The cause of God *now*, is the evangelizing of the world; and the church of Christ is called upon to make a sacrifice *adequate* to the immediate accomplishment of this object. We would say, then, IT IS THE DUTY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, TO MAKE A SACRIFICE ADEQUATE TO THE IMMEDIATE EVANGELIZING OF THE WORLD.

By *immediate*, I mean, *as soon* as the nature of the case will admit; or as the application of a proper cause will produce its legitimate effect.

I. I shall show what it is to *make a sacrifice* for this object, and

II. Present the reasons why the church of Christ should make a sacrifice adequate to the immediate evangelizing of the world.

I. What is it to make *a sacrifice* for this object?

The evangelizing of the world has been a self-sacrificing cause. Every being who has been engaged in it, has sacrificed for it. God has sacrificed his Son. And the Son has sacrificed himself. And the Apostles suffered the loss of all things, for the evangelizing of the world.

To make a sacrifice for this cause, the church must do something more than what is *convenient* for her to do. What is done *conveniently*, is no sacrifice. Convenience, and sacrifice, have nothing in common. It was never convenient for the church to make a sacrifice. If it were proper to speak of God, on this subject, as we speak of man, we may say it was not convenient for God to make the sacrifice He has. Nor was it convenient for Christ to sacrifice himself, as his prayer in the garden shows us. Nor for his disciples to suffer the loss of all things, to evangelize the world. Sacrifice is self-denial. Every man, and every time he makes a sacrifice, denies himself something. But there is no self-denial in what is convenient. Hence, if the church of Christ does for the evangelizing of the world only what is convenient for her to do, so much and no more, she makes no sacrifice for it. She

must give to her *inconvenience.* She must *deny* herself, to give. If God had done nothing more for this cause, than what was convenient for him to do, there would have been no salvation for man. If Christ had consulted his convenience, He surely would not have died such a death, that man might live. And the life of his disciples was a life of self-denial—of sacrifice—of doing what was not done conveniently. And was it convenient for the widow of Zarephath, to make this cake for the Prophet? It would take more than half of every thing of an eatable character she had in the house.

There are three things on the part of the church essential to evangelize the world, and of which she is called upon to make sacrifices;—men, money, and prayer.

Except for calling down the blessing of Heaven upon the means used, and for wisdom to direct, prayer is no further useful than it avails to procure men and money;—men to go forth as evangelists, and money to educate and support them in their fields of labor. Bank bills are good for nothing, any further than they are, or are *supposed* to be, redeemable in specie. And prayer will do nothing towards evangelizing this fallen world, unless it is backed by men and money—the two essential instruments in the cause.

Prayer has been too much a matter of abstraction with the church; a sort of quieter to a disturbed covetous spirit. As prayerless as the church has been, in this cause, her sacrifice of prayer, *apparently*, has been tenfold more than her sacrifices of men and money. As deranged as the currency of the country of late years has been, and as excessive as the issues of paper beyond the specific basis, it has borne no proportion at all to the excess of prayer over and above the sacrifice of men and money. How often does the church, in her meetings and concerts, pour out her soul in prayer, like prophets and apostles, for the evangelizing of the world; and then close with a contribution

scarcely adequate to furnish a heathen family with a Bible. Nothing is more certain than that God has no regard for a prayer, offered by his people for the evangelizing of the world, which is not strong enough to make some sacrifice towards procuring the indispensable material to bring it about. When a man prays for this cause, he makes a sacrifice for it of his *time*, at least; but if he does no more, he makes the least sacrifice for it a Christian can make;—and the goodness of his prayer must be measured by *us*, and will be measured by *Him* who hears prayer, by the amount of money he gives; regulating it by his ability. It is an indisputable truth, that a Christian will sacrifice to accomplish what he prays for. Hence every Christian who meets to pray for the evangelizing of the world, carries as much money in his pocket to give for it, as he carries prayer in his heart—his circumstances being taken into the account. If he does not, his prayer is irredeemable by its proper basis, and is at once protested in the Court of Heaven. Prayer, alone, can no more evangelize the world, than it can build a rail road; and to attempt to make up in prayer, what we withhold in men and money, is a presumption of the most faithless character. If the church of Christ would make sacrifices for the evangelizing of the world, she must pray for it, and pray *fervently;* and deny herself, to give *money*, and *her sons and daughters too;* and even put herself to inconvenience and embarrassment for this great cause.

II. I shall now present the reasons, to show that it is the duty of the church of Christ to make sacrifices *adequate to the immediate* evangelizing of the world.

1. The first reason offered, is her *ability* to do it.

That she has ability to *pray*, and to offer a *sufficiency* of prayer to meet so great an object, is indisputable. The efficacy of prayer is in its *quality*, and not in its *quantity*. A prayer that will move God to convert a *soul*, will move him to convert a *world*, if applied to the case.

The same faith and fervency, sincerity and submission, which will do the one, will do the other. If the church pleads inability here, she must plead it in all cases; for the least, as for the greatest objects. The reason why the disciples of Christ did not evangelize the world, as he commanded them to go and do, was not in their lack of prayer; or in their want of ability to supply *this* part of the material; for their sacrifice in this, was abundant and overflowing; but it was in their inability to sacrifice the men and money. If the church of Christ can pray *at all*, she can put up prayer *adequate* to the evangelizing of the world. Nor will the church *dare* plead inability here, although she may on the other requisition. It is wholly a moral contribution; and to deny her power to pray efficiently to the production of the object, is to deny her distinctive character, and to place her with the world. If the church lacks prayer *now*, she may lack it *forever*, if she will; her natural ability will not be increased.

But has she the other part of the material to sacrifice? There can be no doubt of this, after looking over her resources.

She has *wealth* enough to evangelize the world.

One might conclude from the languishing condition of the different branches of Christian benevolence, and the extraordinary exertions made of late to keep them alive, that the church was not only deprived of all her resources, but was left in the most *poverty-stricken condition.* We have even heard it proposed as a duty in certain contingencies to melt down the church plate, for the purpose of evangelizing the world. And it is truly heart-aching, to hear the supplicating and piteous tones of the agents and almoners of the most important and sublime object on earth, in laboring to extract a few dollars from the church, in one place and another, to carry it on. Were we ignorant of the resources of the church, we should hardly know whom to pity the most, the giver or the receiver.

Yet what is matter of *fact* in the case? It is this. The property of the church of Christ is *immense*. Allowing the members of the church in this country, twenty-one years of age and upward, to possess as much property as the world, according to their numbers, (and we believe they do *more*, for the principles of religion are more economical and frugal, and scarcely less enterprising,) and any man, at that proportion, would be perfectly astonished to examine the valuation-statistics of the several States of this Union, and estimate the amount of property which would fall to the lot of the church, *called evangelical even*. Aside from her real estate, her business and trading capital is so great, that no corporate enterprise, of much magnitude, would be begun without it; or could long be carried on, were it withdrawn. When we consider the wants of the world, and the pressing claims of the gospel upon the charities of the church, nothing under high heaven could injure her reputation for piety so much, as to take her valuation. Nor would she *suffer* it. Rather would she permit our boards of charity to *doom* her, like assessors of taxes, to any amount. To place a Bible in every destitute family on the globe, would not take twenty-five per cent. of the property of the church in New England. And the same per centage on the rest of the American church, with an equal tax upon the British Evangelical church, would place a preached gospel within two hours' travel of every family on earth;—within a more convenient distance than our Pilgrim fathers enjoyed; certainly so as to give every soul, for whom Christ died, a full and fair opportunity to receive the gospel and live, or to reject it and perish. If unsanctified mind were *competent* to evangelize the world, let the church offer twenty-five per cent. of her property to Mammon, to accomplish it, and in five years the work will be done; and at a far better speculation than Mammon ever made before.

But could the church make this sacrifice? There can

be no doubt of it, and apostolic devotion would do it. Could not the Christian, who owns but a dollar, part with twenty-five cents of it, to evangelize the world? And yet it would bear harder upon *him*, than that proportion would upon the owner of any larger amount. To the more wealthy portion of the church, such a tax would scarcely be felt;—nay, would rather prove a relief. If it be said, that although the church were willing to make this sacrifice, the community could not bear such a dislocating and loss of capital,—we answer;—that it would be a *sacrifice*, there can be no doubt. Still, it would be far less than *Mammon* has made, scores of times, in past ages, and for doing *evil*. The Russian Campaign, in 1812, by the invasion of the French armies, was the occasion of a greater dislocation of capital, derangement of business, and perversion of the common laws of society, than the church of Christ are called upon to sacrifice to evangelize the world. A single war of foreign conquest, and such as has occurred in almost every country since Christ was upon earth, has cost more money, displaced and carried abroad more capital, and been a greater sacrifice of every thing man has to sacrifice, than the church would make to preach the gospel to every creature. For the American church to supply her part of the expenditure most literally, would be a far less sacrifice than she sustained in her Revolutionary struggle; whether we estimate men, or property. Nor would it be unsafe to say as much of the British church in the same war.

Why then cannot the community sustain as great a shock, and live through as much pressure, to send the gospel of peace through the earth, as to ravage and waste it by war and bloodshed? Besides, every financier, whether civil or ecclesiastical, knows, that the dislocating and derangement of so much property in the case, would be rather imaginary than real. A very large portion of it would still be left in her own hands; and the bills of credit of the church, must always be available and current, at

least to twenty-five per cent. of her property. And surely what the community can sustain in war, may and *can* be sustained in evangelizing the earth. And wars will never cease from the earth, nor can the church escape taxation to support them, until it is evangelized by the gospel: and it is for her to say, and say *truly*, which is the cheapest. In every century of her existence, has the church herself, *freely or grudgingly*, sacrificed more men and money for war, than she would have done to preach the gospel to every creature. As much as the church gives for the spread and triumph of the gospel, so much the less she will be called upon to give for the purpose and devastation of war. The one is as frugal in its character, as the other is wasteful. To say nothing of moral principle, the church has never acted in this matter the part of prudence or economy. Her war tax, of the last century, would have evangelized the earth thrice over. We say not these things, as *anti-church*. With all her faults, we love the church. She is still, and ever has been, the light and hope of the world. But faithfulness obliges us to say, she has greatly erred, as well as mistaken her position and policy. So far as property is concerned, therefore, can there be a shadow of doubt, but that the church has ability to evangelize the world?

But, where are the *men*? We answer, a large portion of them the church has already in her own bosom:—and the rest of them she can get, where the widow of Zarephath got her meal to make her *second cake*. It should be remembered that the barrel was not *full*, to begin upon; nor had she at any one time a sufficiency to last through the famine; but only enough for her present exigency.

By the barrel of meal not wasting, is meant, that although she took about all out of it, each time she prepared a meal for herself and the prophet, still, when the next cake was wanted, she went and found as much more in the barrel; and although it seemed as if it *would* get

empty, yet it never *did*, until a course of nature otherwise supplied them. Hence she used as freely as though she uniformly dipped out of a full barrel. The church of Christ should possess more of this widow's faith, as well as pursue her policy. She has already within her pale, hosts of sons and daughters, of competent ability for the missionary work, and they should be immediately put to the necessary training. And the Holy Ghost is bringing to her bosom hosts more. One hundred thousand missionaries, would bring the story of the cross, with all its blessings, within hearing of every soul on earth; and much more conveniently than the Sandwich Islanders have heard it. The church has now enrolled upon her records, more than half that number, under twenty-five years of age. And the way to obtain the other half is, to fit and send off those she *has*, as soon as possible. The way the widow of Zarephath obtained her meal for the *second* cake, and the very condition of it, was to take out of the barrel what there was, for the *first*. What if, on visiting the barrel, and seeing only enough for a cake, she had said, "If I take this out, and no more should come in, what shall I do then;"—and so stood waiting, and fainting, in *faith*, as well as in body? Is it likely there would have been any increase of the meal? She must take out what was *wanted*, or there would no more come in.

Now this is peculiarly the policy the church should pursue. If she would increase, she must first diminish, for this glorious work. But an individual church objects, she cannot spare her glory and hope in this way;—she would sink and die. And suppose she should sink and die; what more glorious death than to die raising missionaries to evangelize the earth? Would to God, there were such dying of the churches daily. What are our churches for? Are they to maintain simple abstract life; or to keep their places, and count numbers, and eke out a half-living, half-dying existence? Was the apostolic

church of this spirit? She was emphatically and principally a missionary organization. And in the present lost state of the world, this should be the leading feature of the church *at this day*, in all her branches. If she *lived* under such a sacrificing of her youth, or *died* under it, she would be sure to live or die unto the Lord. Still, so far from dying under such an operation, nothing would be more productive of life and vigor. Did such a system kill the apostolic church? No, nor do churches *ever* die in this way. The Holy Ghost would not let them die. The sacrifice itself would be a most powerful means of grace. Nothing could be like it, to convince the world of the power and truth of religion. The faith and character of the church would then harmonize, and the impenitent world would be constrained to acknowledge her origin and destiny. And under the influences of God's Spirit, she might expect for every one she spared of her youth to evangelize the world, she would receive to her bosom two in their stead. The structure and genius of the Christian church is by many overlooked. It is a church of motion, not of rest. At rest, she dies. One half the business of the Home Missionary Society is to go about the country and pick up the skeletons of churches which undertook to live at rest. At first they did nothing for *others;* and at last they did nothing for *themselves;* and the last state is a legitimate consequence of the first. It will be found, on examination, that those churches which do the most for others, do the most for themselves. Besides, if the church would part with her *youth* for missionaries, she could the more cheerfully part with her *property*, the other essential part of the material. With her children in a foreign missionary field, or fitting for it, to part with her property would be little else than to divide her estate among her lawful heirs. If your children, Christian brethren, were absent, evangelizing the earth, would it be any hardship to you to sit down and devise them twenty-five per cent. of what you

have, to make them comfortable, while laboring and suffering to convert the world to Jesus Christ?

The church of Christ then has the ability to arise and evangelize the world immediately. She has the prayers and the property;—and by what she now possesses, and has by faith, in her covenant-keeping, prayer-hearing God, she has the men, and may go to fitting and sending them away, and with the utmost confidence that her substance will not waste or fail, until the earth be filled with the knowledge of God.

2. The second reason for the church of Christ to make a sacrifice adequate to the immediate evangelizing of the world, is the command of Christ, laid upon her to do it. Although this reason is the first in obligation, yet for reasons which will appear, I have placed it second in the order.

Christ has told his church to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature;—that is, go and evangelize the earth. It is now more than eighteen centuries since the church received this injunction; and which she has never literally obeyed. And her obligation to obey it has depended on her *ability* to obey it. Although he gave it to his *disciples*, it must have been mainly prospective in its application. It must be obligatory in every age, to the extent of the ability of the existing church to fulfil it. The first Christian church could not have done it; nor is it certain that the church in the earlier periods of her existence could have evangelized the world, to the extent of this command. But whenever she became able to do it, she became bound. Her obligation must be measured by her ability. Christ's disciples were bound to obey it, as far as they were able. The succeeding members of the church, as far as they were able. The extent of the obligation resting on the church to evangelize the world, has uniformly been co-extensive with her ability to do it; it being more or less. So that when she became literally able, she became literally bound. And now, whether the

church in past ages or generations, has been able to obey this precept of Christ, is immaterial to inquire. But if the first reason assigned for it is sound, then the *existing* church is bound to fulfil it literally. Every thing that is sacred and solemn, weighty and momentous, implied in Christ's last injunction to his church, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," is brought to bear upon the church of this generation. Having the power, she is responsible for its use. With the *means* in her hands, she neglects a positive, known duty; and "there is nothing she cannot face or fly from," but her duty neglected. This meets her every where, and stares her in the face.

3. The third reason why the church should *immediately* evangelize the world, is, that economy requires it to be done *now*.

The world is constantly growing worse, and that amount of life and property, which would evangelize it *now*, will be inadequate to do it in any *future* age or generation. The work in the first ages of Christianity would have been very far less than now. Besides, having an effect to be produced, and abundant means to accomplish it, it is always economy, as well as wisdom, to supply a *sufficiency* to produce the end. In military operations, there is nothing which wise politicians are more disposed to condemn, as bad economy, than a war of "shifts and scraps." The application of means, *at once* adequate to produce the desired effect, is thought a more prudent expenditure. The missionary operations of the church, have *hitherto* been operations of "shifts and scraps." Looked upon in the light of converting souls to God, they have done immense good, and deserve great commendation. But viewed in the light of evangelizing *the world*, they have been a most inefficient, not to say prodigal expenditure. If the church has made by them, a *relative gain* upon the world, there are more upon the earth now, sub-

stantially without what God is in the habit of blessing to man's salvation, than there were thirty years ago. And if the church proceeds in her present course any length of time, she will spend more property than twenty-five per cent. of her wealth, and more of her youth, than would *now* take to evangelize the world, if applied *at once;* and after all, the work will still lie upon her hands. Having the *means* to evangelize the world, and lying under the most imperative obligations from the command of Christ to go and do it; do not duty and economy both urge on the church to accomplish it? The work has gotten to be done, and instrumentally to be done by the *church;* and what can she gain by delay? The command of Christ will not be annulled, or its obligatory power abated, or the expense of its accomplishment lessened. And if the church is not bound to evangelize the world, when she is able to do it, at what period of her future existence must she do it? If her ability is not her rule of duty in the case, what rule is? How much more than an adequate ability to do it, must she have? And what is finally to be her rule of action? The church now has no plea for a postponement of the work, that she will not have in any subsequent period of her existence.

4. I present the *condition* of the heathen, as a fourth reason for the immediate evangelizing of the world.

That their *temporal* condition, without the gospel, is pitiable, is admitted on all hands. And if the faith of the church of Christ be sound, they do but die to go down to hell. How many then of the ordinary successive generations of five hundred millions of heathen, must perish eternally, ere the church shall see fit to apply the means to save them, of which she has and abounds? If Christ's estimate of the soul be just, what an aggregate of loss is here? But the contemplation of it turns the head giddy and withers the heart. I know we hear it said that the protraction of this work serves to keep up and cherish in

the church a spirit of diffusive benevolence. So then millions of heathen must annually perish, to keep up in the Christian's heart, what should live and burn there without. The magnitude of the loss, if neglected, and of the gain, if attended to, certainly urges on the church to this greatest of all her works, and to the discharge of the most imperious of all her duties. She has neglected this work too long already. Had she done her duty in past ages, we believe the world would have been evangelized long ago. Apostolic devotion would have done it. With the present resources of the church, it would now do it in seven years.

5. I present, as the fifth reason for the immediate evangelizing of the world, *self-preservation.* The church cannot live, and maintain her present position. She must rise higher, or fall lower. She must rise and conquer the world, or the world will rise and conquer her. Her enemies were never more numerous, or vigorous, than at this moment. Whatever ground they give up, is contested by the inch. Notwithstanding all the church of this generation has done to evangelize the world, there are more now living destitute of the means of grace, than when she commenced her operations, owing to the increase of our race. For every square mile she has conquered upon heathen ground, five of her own have run to a moral waste. The church does not now educate ministers enough to supply the increased wants of *her own* community; much less to furnish a competency to evangelize the heathen portion of the earth. Still this department of Christian benevolence is fast declining, and most of the rest have come to a dead stand, if they are not on the wane. Already is the church deliberating whether to advance or retreat; and *deliberation* itself, in this work, *is* retreat. It shows a loss of heart, a distrust, which is little short of a moral palsy of the whole system. With all the resources of *earth,* in her hands, without heart, what avails

it? Besides, if she does not advance, and make conquests, she must soon give up what she *has* made. Yet this will break down her defensive barrier, and then must she struggle for her own existence. And although her dying throes may be convulsive and powerful, yet she must sink at last under the power of the enemy. It avails nothing that God has purposed a contrary result, unless the purposed means to accomplish it are applied to the case; for what God has purposed to do *by* means, he will not do *without*. To look for a latter day glory, with inadequate exertion on the part of the church to produce it, is looking for what will never come. Instead of this, unless the church changes her policy, for more vigorous and apostolic measures, she must look for a latter day defeat and overthrow. Christ, and the god of this world, will not much longer divide its reign between them. Why did the primitive church of Palestine and Judea, eventually lose her hold of that garden of God, where Jesus wept and died;—where the apostles preached and prayed; and which once had the gospel as her meat and drink? Answer. Failing to gospelize her heathen neighbors, they at last heathenized her. And how frequently have large branches of the church been destroyed, or displaced, by the same ruinous policy. Failing to water, they were not watered;—saving more than was meet, it tended to their poverty. And the same unchristian policy, which has ruined a *branch*, will if generally pursued ruin the *whole*. The church must rise, and evangelize the world, or the world will rise and heathenize her.

6. As a sixth reason to urge the church to this work, I would present *worldly enterprise*, of every description.

As gigantic as this work of the church is, and as sacrificing, it is far less so than has often been made for worldly objects. The expense, loss, and suffering of the church, would be light, compared with what the French nation imposed on herself, for offensive and aggressive war, in

and after her Revolution; and for a much longer period, than it would take to evangelize the world, if the church would take herself to the work with the same unflinching hand. During his reign, Napoleon expended more, and sacrificed more, in every physical resource, privation and suffering, than it would take to evangelize three such worlds as this. And this has been the activity, enterprise and wisdom of the world, every century since Christ left it. And why cannot the church show as much to effect the best of objects, as the world can, to accomplish the worst? Look at the worldly improvements begun and carried on in every direction; the canals, rail-roads, tunneling of mountains, and making highways under the very rivers of the earth, and see what man can do when he has a mind to work. What mountains laid low, what vallies exalted, and rough ways smoothed! O, if the church of Christ would work like this, for the evangelizing of the world, how soon and gloriously it would be accomplished. If the spirit and character of the work were such, that it could be put up as a piece of worldly speculation, with a stock and dividend, how very soon the knowledge of the Lord would cover the earth.

Lastly. As the last reason to induce the church to discharge this duty, I present *her own purity and happiness.*

The influence of so great a portion of the world remaining unevangelized, debased by many species of vice, of which the depravity of man is capable, coming in contact with the church by so many points and interests, and especially with the unsanctified portion of Christendom, must tend to destroy her purity, and dispossess her of much of her spirituality; in the same proportion must she lose her religious enjoyment. Now a powerful reflex action, would be as salutary as a corrupt one is injurious. Besides, what blessings might not the church expect from her God and King, with such a duty performed? A duty

which she has every motive heaven and earth can present, to perform, and no motive to leave undone.

And now, if the reasons presented why the church should make a sacrifice adequate for the immediate evangelizing the world are sound, then she should be *called* upon to furnish the means at once; or as soon as, in the nature of the case, they can be applied. She should be called upon to furnish the men, the money, and the prayer, —the whole material. And the simple fact that it *is* her duty, affords *presumptive* evidence at least, that she will do it, if called upon. And is it right to call upon her to do less than her duty? But it will be said, that it is with much difficulty she can be urged to do, what she does for this cause, *now;* how then can an hundred fold be extracted from her? She has the *ability*, we allow, but *not* the *heart.* Answer. It is always easier for a Christian to do his *whole* duty, than *half* of it, or any part *less* than the whole. The less he does, the harder he performs that little; and the nearer he approaches to doing his whole duty, the easier he does what he does; because, the more duty done, the more *heart;* and *heart* is what is wanting. If a church should exact of its members secret prayer, once a week; family prayer, once a month; and to attend public worship, once a year; would she not find it difficult to get this much done? How then can she get them done in their accustomed manner? The church is called upon to give but *little*, and that little almost kills her; and how can she be brought up to discharge her whole duty? But the difficulty lies in the *little she does.* If she gave more, she would give that more easily; and the more she gave, the easier she would give it, until she arrived at the highest point of her duty.

The church wants *heart*, not *means;* and she should be called upon, according to her *means*, and not according to her *heart.* The less she sacrifices, the less she will have a heart to sacrifice; until she does nothing. And

the more she does, the more she has a heart to do, until she does her whole duty. She gives ten times as much *now*, as she did thirty years ago, and with much more heart then she gave then. If she had been called upon, a year ago, to give twenty-five per cent. of her *whole property*, instead of twenty-five per cent. *increase upon her former charity*, barely enough to keep the cause from sinking, and that only for one year, with the certainty at the end of it, to be called upon for as much more, and with the same languishing results, is it *certain* she would not have obeyed? Who had not rather be exposed to the peltings of a copious rain for an *hour*, than to the same amount of wet, drizzled out into a three days' storm? Besides, there is a desire in the human mind to see *finished*, what is *begun*. Yet every intelligent Christian knows, that at the present rate of sacrifice, this world cannot be evangelized for many generations. Many precious souls will be saved by it; but the latter day glory must be put over to other centuries. If Christ has commanded the church to evangelize the world, and she has ability to do it; and the world is sinking to perdition without it; can any reason be assigned for not calling upon her to fulfil her duty, so solemnly imposed, especially as the whole field is white and ready for the harvest?

There are two words, the purport of which the church of late has not well understood or studied, *Requisition*, and *Donation*. When the French nation would render her immense resources most available for the purposes of war, she divided the Empire into departments; these departments into provinces, and pursued the process of division down to very small villages. Then each of these villages was required to raise, equip, and pay one soldier for the army. This requsition placed an host at the disposal of the government. The church, in evangelizing the world, should pursue this policy. Every church of fifty members, should provide, fit and pay, one missionary; and larger churches in that proportion. This would bring an immense number

to the work of evangelizing the world. Nor can any thing much short of this do the work. This is not extravagant. What is extravagance? If any thing, is it not, laboring to produce a desired *effect*, with means *known* to be utterly inadequate? Nor would this burden the American church so much, as the Revolutionary war burdened the whole community for eight successive years. The competency and support of a missionary, so selected, would be much better secured. He would go forth, as the nursling of the church to which he belonged, and to many of her members as their kindred according to the flesh.

But what the church wants, more than all things else, is *devotion*,—heart to the work. With the means the church has in her hands, would the apostles of Christ let the world go unevangelized much longer? Would *he* who suffered the loss of all things for this world, with the means of the church, see it linger, as it now does? The church of *this generation* must meet her Lord in the judgment; and when asked, why she did not evangelize the world and fulfil his last commandment, what can she plead? Not that she had not *ability* to do it; or that she did not know her Lord's will; or that a dying, lost world, did not need it. What then can she say, as an excuse for her neglect? Only *this—I lacked the heart!*

Finally, whatever becomes of the rest of the world, it is high time that Palestine, and the regions round about her, were brought under the influence of the gospel.

She stands associated with names and events, of the most hallowed description. *In* and *about* her, was the father of our race lost and redeemed;—Jesus lived, and wept, and died;—the apostles preached, and prayed, and suffered the loss of all things, to evangelize the world.

Dear Brethren, well have you thought of, and selected this spot, as a more favorite object upon which to bestow your charity. Cease not until she is evangelized; until she becomes what she *was*, the beauty of holiness, and the garden of the Lord. AMEN.

ANNUAL MEETING.

THE Twenty-second Annual Meeting of the PALESTINE MISSIONARY SOCIETY, was held at Rev. P. COUCH's Meeting-house, North Bridgewater, June 15th, 1842.

The public services commenced at 11 o'clock, A. M. when a Sermon was preached by Rev. WILLARD PIERCE; a communication from Rev. DANIEL TEMPLE was read by the Secretary; the Treasurer presented his Report, with the Auditor's certificate; and an Address was offered by Rev. C. EDDY, as a deputation from the Parent Society.

Voted, That the Treasurer's Report be accepted.

Voted, That the thanks of this Society be presented to Rev. Mr. PIERCE, for his Sermon, and that a copy of it be requested for publication.

Voted, That the thanks of this Society be presented to Rev. C. EDDY, for his aid on this occasion; to the First Church and Society in North Bridgewater, for their hospitality; and to the choir of singers, for their performances.

The following resolution, offered by Rev. Dr. HITCHCOCK, after remarks by the mover, and by Rev. D. HUNTINGTON, Dr. ALDEN, Dr. CHAPIN, and SILAS PAINE, Esq., was adopted; and its adoption was signified by the rising of the whole assembly: viz.

Resolved, That this Society will endeavor to raise a sum, in aid of the funds of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the ensuing year, equal to that raised the present year.

The next Annual Meeting was appointed to be at East Randolph, and Rev. ABEL G. DUNCAN was chosen preacher.

The following officers were chosen for the current year.

REV. DANIEL THOMAS, *President.*
DEA. MORTON EDDY, } *Vice Presidents.*
MR. JOSIAH W. KINGMAN, }
REV. JONAS PERKINS, *Secretary.*
EBENEZER ALDEN, M. D., *Treasurer.*
SILAS PAINE, ESQ., *Auditor.*

TREASURER'S REPORT.

Receipts from June 10, 1841, *to June* 15, 1842.

Abington, First Parish, Gent. 34 60; La. 87 60; Mon. Con. 12 88; Mrs. H. King 50,	$185 08
" South Parish, Gent. 58 19; La. 11 20; Mon. Con. 38 19; Friend 5; Friend deceased 85,	197 58
" East Parish, Gent. 27 61; La. 24 05; Miss L. Beal 10; Legacy Mrs. Rachel Lane 50,	111 65
" North Parish, Monthly Concert,	18 15
Braintree, First Parish, Gent. and La. 55; La. 60; Mon. Con. 60,	175 00
" South Parish, Gent. and La. 20 93; Mon. Con. 14 71; W. T. Thayer 25,	60 64
Braintree and Weymouth Union Society, Gent. 30 75; La. 38 26; Mon. Con. 42 35; Neighborhood do. 47 73,	159 09
Bridgewater, Trin. Soc., Monthly Concert,	18 66
Easton, Gent. and La. 53; Mon. Con. 23,	76 00
E. and *W. Bridgewater*, Union Soc. Gent. and La. 64 90; E. Reed 20; Isaac Alden, Esq. 20, Life sub.; Mon. Con. 28 23,	133 13
Hanover, Monthly Concert,	5 00
Hanson, Monthly Concert,	12 50
North Middleboro', Gent. and La. for 1841 and 1842,	40 00
Norfolk County, Friend,	50 00
North Bridgewater, Messrs. Kingman,	53 00
" First Parish, Gent. and La. 250 98; La. 21 88; Friend 3,	275 86
" South Parish, Gent. 19 84; La. 33 63; Mon. Con. 9 59,	63 06
Quincy, Evang. Soc., La. 10; Mon. Con. 8 50,	18 50
Randolph, First Parish, Gent. 65 61; La. 51 68; Mon. Con. 45 60, Friend 50,	212 89
" East Parish, Gent. & La. 104 69; La. 60; Mon. Con. 27 25,	191 94
Scituate, Monthly Concert,	11 13
Weymouth, South Par., Gent. and La. 58 53; La. 49; Mon. Con. 20,	127 53
Annual Meeting, 1841, at Hanover,	25 00
	$2,221 39

EBENEZER ALDEN, TREASURER.

NOTE.—The whole amount collected since the formation of the Society is $26,457 68.

Having examined the accounts of the Treasurer of the Palestine Missionary Society, I find them rightly cast, and properly vouched.

SILAS PAINE, AUDITOR.

RANDOLPH, JUNE 15, 1842.

LETTER FROM MR. TEMPLE.

SMYRNA, JANUARY 5, 1842.

To the Palestine Missionary Society.

BELOVED BRETHREN AND FRIENDS,

THROUGH the goodness and forbearance and long-suffering of our Heavenly Father, I am still spared, and permitted again to address you. On the 2d day of this month it was just twenty years since I embarked at Boston for the East, and how deeply affecting to me is the remembrance of all the way in which the Lord has led me during this long season, to humble me, and prove me, to know what was in my heart, and, as I trust, to do me good at my latter end.

Within this period my aged and beloved father, my two eldest sisters and my youngest brother, have gone to man's long home, and are sleeping together in the cemetery of my native town, till the heavens shall be no more. One half of what was once my beloved family is reposing among the dead on the island of the shipwrecked Apostle to the gentiles, waiting for that great day of the Son of man, when he shall descend from heaven with his mighty angels, and raise and change in the twinkling of an eye all that sleep in him. One of my brothers has found, as I suppose, a place among those whom we shall all meet when the sea shall give up the dead that are therein. The wind has passed over them and they are gone! But I still remain, joined to all the living! Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and forget not all his benefits!

When I arrived at Malta, twenty years ago, there was but one American Missionary in this part of the world; but within that

period, forty married ones, and several not married, have entered this field. Of these, seventeen have died, that is, seven men and ten women, of whom all, with three exceptions, were married.

The amount of good accomplished by the grace of God, through their instrumentality, can never be known, till the books of the last day shall be opened, bringing every work and every secret thing into judgment. It is a consolation and an encouragement to me to remember that so much has been attempted, and so much accomplished, though so very far below what we should all most fervently and prayerfully desire.

I am not aware that any events have happened within the past year, in these countries, so remarkable as those that marked the two preceding years. There has been, however, an onward movement in many directions. Syria has indeed passed out of the hands of tyranny; but it has been only to fall into a state of civil war and anarchy. The Patriarch of the Maronites on Mount Lebanon, who imprisoned even till death the pious and promising Asaad Shidiak for his faith in Christ, has seen within a few weeks past many of his people fall victims to the fury of the Druzes, whom he had provoked by goading on his nation against them. Poor Syria has been lately visited by plague, war, famine and small-pox. One woe is scarcely past in that devoted country before another woe comes quickly. She seems doomed to drink, even to the dregs, the cup of the Lord's indignation, and no one knows how long this is to be continued.

During the past summer, a most desolating fire laid nearly one third of this city in ashes, and left some twenty or thirty thousands of persons without a home. The Jews were among the greatest sufferers in this awful visitation. It would be consoling to me, could I inform you that any among the sufferers have apparently been led piously and penitently to ask, *What have I done?* and to turn to Him who has smitten them. No such instances, however, have come to our knowledge. A considerable number of the Jews here do indeed profess to believe that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, but there is too much reason to fear that few if any among them do, as yet, believe in him to the saving of the soul. The power of their Rabbis is, however, greatly diminished, and their anathemas little dreaded in comparison with former times. Access to them is now comparatively

an easy thing. But, alas, here as in all other countries, the blindness in part that has happened to Israel, is not yet taken away. The veil is still upon their hearts, as a people. I would hope that the recent kindness they have experienced from Christians in their distress has softened, if it has not subdued and removed, some of their deeply rooted and in many instances too well founded prejudices against the professed disciples of our Saviour. The Deliverer that has come out of Zion will in his good time turn away ungodliness from Jacob. Every year brightens the prospect of that approaching event.

The truth as it is in Christ is continually making progress among the Armenians, and never perhaps more rapidly and obviously than during the past year. This, however, has not been without opposition on the part of those who love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. The friends of evangelical truth among them have had much reason to thank God and take courage though they have met with opposition. A great change has been recently effected in the management of the political and ecclesiastical affairs of that nation that gives promise of better things in times to come. The minds of the people are roused and their expectations are awakened. They desire and demand a new order of things.

As for the Turks in general, they are dissatisfied with the recent reforms that have been introduced, and are anxious to return to their ancient customs and usages, and the general voice seems likely to prevail. Political affairs in this empire are much like the wind which goeth towards the south, and turneth about to the north, and whirleth about continually. The foundations are all out of course, and what can the righteous do? But, the Lord reigns on his throne, high and lifted up. In this let us always rejoice, even though clouds and darkness are round about him.

Let us rejoice that the Lord Jehovah has said, I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear! Idols shall perish, and the world shall be filled with the knowledge and glory of the Lord. He has sworn by himself, he could swear by no greater, that so it shall be. *He will do as he has said.*

I remember you, dear brethren and friends, with lively interest, and rejoice that the blessed God can visit you all more easily with the best heavenly blessings than I can with fraternal and affectionate thoughts, remembrances and prayers. May that mind be in us all which was also in Christ Jesus.

With all my heart I commend you all to Him who is able to keep us from falling and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, and remain, as always,

Most truly and affectionately yours in the gospel,

D. Temple.

REV. MR. TERRY'S SERMON

BEFORE THE

PALESTINE MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

PREACHED AT RANDOLPH, MASS., JUNE 18, 1851.

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A

SERMON,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

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PALESTINE MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

AT THEIR

THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD AT RANDOLPH, MASS., JUNE 18, 1851.

BY JAMES P. TERRY,

Pastor of the Second Congregational Church in Weymouth.

BOSTON:

PRESS OF T. R. MARVIN, 42 CONGRESS STREET.

1851.

SERMON.

JOHN III. 16.—1 JOHN V. 19.

FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH, BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE.

AND THE WHOLE WORLD LIETH IN WICKEDNESS.

THAT the Almighty should devise and execute a scheme for man's rescue, displaying, beyond all his other works, his infinite perfections, and adequate in its provisions to the moral necessities of the whole human family; and yet, that after so long a time since it was announced to the world as "finished," it should be not only unavailing, but even *unknown* to the greater part of those for whom it was designed, is a matter which has often exercised, if not perplexed the mind of the thoughtful Christian. He believes that this scheme, on which God has, for aught that appears, exhausted his attributes, contains all that is necessary to elevate the entire race from its deep degradation, to the glory and felicity of heaven; yet he cannot hide from his eyes the painful fact, that its ample provisions are lost as to the greater part of those who need them; that even now, almost "the whole world lieth in wicked-

ness;" that much the largest portion of mankind are filling up the measure of their iniquities, and will descend into the fire that never shall be quenched, without its ever having been announced in their hearing, that "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Why is it so? he asks. Why, at the end of eighteen centuries since the death of Christ, is the knowledge of his death confined to so small a portion of those for whom he suffered? It is my purpose to answer this inquiry. I shall first speak of the *fact* of the limited spread of Christianity, and then consider some *reasons* for it.

I. The fact itself. Statistics on this subject are truly appalling. They show that of the ten hundred millions that now people our world, more than six hundred millions are heathens; that one hundred millions are Mohammedans; and that, of the remaining three hundred millions, two-thirds, though nominally Christians, are yet so far removed in their belief and practice from the doctrines and duties of the religion of Christ, that as a means of salvation the gospel is of hardly any more advantage to them than it is to the heathen.

Scarcely less appalling is the map of the earth in its representations. It shows us, that of the fifty millions of square miles contained in the land surface of the globe, upon more than thirty millions it is unknown that the Son of God ever trod this earth; and that not more than five millions are occupied by those who generally embrace the

Protestant religion;—that of the entire eastern continent, less than one-thirtieth part is occupied by evangelical sects, while nine-tenths of it are in the possession of heathens or Mohammedans. It exhibits the three grand divisions of the earth, Asia, Africa, and Oceanica, embracing more than three-fifths of all the land upon the globe, as covered with clouds of midnight darkness, through which no ray of light penetrates, save over those few spots where the altars of Christianity have been erected by the missionaries of the cross. Nothing presents a more affecting view of the moral condition of our world than a missionary map exhibiting the relative size of its enlightened and unenlightened portions. The few luminous spots are to the surrounding darkness but little more than the beacon lights that glimmer here and there on the shores of the ocean, to the wide waste of water that lies between them.

But could we see the *reality* of what is thus represented to us;—could we, like the angel having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, fly in the midst of heaven and visit every nation and kindred and tongue and people;—could we look down upon the 350,000,000 of China prostrate three times a day before their tutelary deities;—could we see the sensual Hindoos in the act of offering their blind adoration to their myriads of gods—the representations and patrons of whatever is ridiculous, obscene and cruel;—could we gaze upon the disgusting and horrid features of human depravity, as they stand out frightfully distinct, in the treachery and ferocity of the Malays, and in the sottishness of the Hottentots; in the

infanticide of China, and in the cannabalism of Fejee;—in all the vices and crimes, the deeds of cruelty, pollution and shame, which in a greater or less degree characterize every unevangelized nation; — could we thus make the circuit of our globe, and survey these 600,000,000 of heathen in all their degradation and sin, we should obtain an impression of the moral desolation of our world, such as no representation of figures nor exhibition of maps can make; and we should understand, as never before, the import of the Apostle's declaration, *The whole world lieth in wickedness.*

II. We are now to consider the reasons for this fact. Why is so large a portion of the earth yet unevangelized?

1. Is it because the work of its entire evangelization is in its nature impracticable?

It is unquestionably a *difficult* work. The obstacles to the conversion of the heathen, arising from their religious prejudices, their mental and moral habits, and their social and civil condition, are truly formidable. To persuade a people to abandon as false, a religion which has come down to them from remote antiquity, the religion in which they were educated, by which all their habits have been formed, and with which all their recollections are associated; a religion, too, which is congenial to their corrupt hearts, and which fosters their natural desires and passions,—and receive in its stead, one that is totally opposed, in its spirit and requirements, to their inclinations, their prejudices, their habits,—is a work

which must be *undertaken*, in order that the real difficulty of it be understood.

Yet, difficult as it unquestionably is, it is not impracticable. For, (a) in the first place, just such obstacles as now hinder the conversion of the nations, have been overcome. Difficulties as formidable as those which exist in the stupidity of the African, in the ferocity of the Battas, in the pride and prejudice of the Chinese, in the superstition and jealousy of the Japanese, have again and again been surmounted. Put together all the difficulties that can be conceived to arise from the most fascinating idolatry, the most inveterate prejudice, the most savage cruelty, and the most beastly sensuality; and they can be matched by difficulties which Christianity overcame when she vanquished the splendid idolatry of Greece and Rome, tamed the fierce barbarity of the ancient Britons, and raised from the lowest degradation the modern Sandwich Islanders. Neither the depravity of man, nor unfriendliness of climate, presents any obstacle which Christianity has not, at one time or another, successfully encountered. There cannot be found any soil more barren than that in which it has taken root; no clime more uncongenial than that in which it has extended wide its branches. There are no hearts harder than thousands which it has subdued; and bitterer enemies can never rise up against it, than such as have fallen before it. Satan cannot defend his kingdom with walls higher, broader and more adamantine, than those which Christianity has many times laid level with the ground. So that, were the religion of Christ now to extend its triumphs "from

sea to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth," it would encounter no new form of difficulty, nor achieve any new kind of conquest. Its victories would be only a repetition of those already gained. But what has been done, may be done again. Obstacles that have been surmounted, are not insuperable. As, therefore, the conversion of the world involves no greater difficulties, essentially, than have already been overcome, it is not impracticable.

(b) And this is further evident from the predictions of the Bible. "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall serve him." "For from the rising of the sun, even to the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered and a pure offering." "The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ." These and other inspired predictions place the final spread of the gospel over the whole earth beyond a doubt. But these predictions can be fulfilled only by the removal of just such obstacles as now hinder the work of the world's evangelization. These obstacles, then, are not insuperable. To affirm that they are, is to deny the verity of God's word.

(c) And further, when we consider this work in relation to the power of him who has undertaken it, we cannot doubt its practicability, without doubting whether God is omnipotent. It is God's work; and though committed to human hands, it is carried forward by divine power. But "is any thing too

hard for the Lord?" Has he not only *predicted*, but actually *undertaken* the accomplishment of a work which is really impracticable? But if the work is not impracticable, then it must be for some other reason that it is not accomplished.

2. Is it because the church has not possessed the means necessary for its accomplishment? The ability of the church to perform, instrumentally, the work assigned her, consists in her men and money. And is it for want of either or both of these that the work is yet unfinished?

Is it for want of men? How many men did Christ, at his ascension, leave on earth under commission to preach the gospel to every creature? The little band of one hundred and twenty disciples, assembled in an upper chamber at Jerusalem to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost, comprised, if not the whole numerical strength, nearly or quite all the moral power of the Christian church. But small as was their number, they went forth to execute their high commission, and actually became witnesses for the Lord, "both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the earth." Those few individuals succeeded in publishing the gospel throughout the whole civilized world. And if so small a number could, at the very outset of the Christian religion, proclaim its doctrines over so large a portion of the earth, could not the still greater number converted through their instrumentality, have extended the knowledge of these doctrines still farther. And had the continually increasing number of converts to Christ been fired with apostolic zeal, need many generations

have passed away before all the tribes and families of the earth should have seen the salvation of God? Surely, it was not for want of numbers in the church, that the work, commenced, and carried so far towards its completion, by the little band that went out from Jerusalem, was not finished at an early period in her history.

And if, at any subsequent time, the church has so dwindled away, as to lack sufficient numerical strength to evangelize the world, she certainly is not in such a state now, nor has she been for centuries past. Had all who have been members of Protestant churches during the last *half century*, devoted themselves to the work of missions with the zeal of a Paul, an Eliot, or a Martyn, would there have been to-day any tribe or family, to whom the gospel offer had not been made? And were the eighty thousand Protestant ministers of the present day, and the many times greater number of pious laymen, qualified to aid in the missionary work, now to disperse themselves among the heathen, and labor for their evangelization with the assiduity and self-denial which worldly men exhibit in the accomplishment of their enterprises, would even the present generation pass away before the gospel would be published to the ends of the earth?

When we look at the actual results of many an individual's labors in the work of evangelization, and remember that there are in the church many thousands capable of effecting similar results, we cannot for a moment admit that it is for want of numbers merely, that the church has failed to

accomplish her work. Were all, or even half of those who have by profession consecrated themselves to Christ, to accomplish a tenth or a hundredth part as much as has been accomplished by a Schwartz, a Carey, a Brainerd, or as thousands of less note have individually accomplished, the standard of the cross would speedily be raised in every part of the habitable earth.

Is it because the church could not command money enough to send abroad and support her men, that the world is not evangelized? When was the church more destitute of wealth than in her infancy? And if, with all her poverty, she could support missionaries enough to preach the gospel throughout the civilized world, can it be, that with her present abounding wealth she is wanting in pecuniary ability to evangelize the heathen? She has given much; but has she given according to her ability? Some there are, who, like the poor widow, have given all their living; but the most, if they have given at all, have given of their abundance. Their gifts have cost them no self-denial, subjected them to no inconvenience. And yet, by means of these charities, the mere crumbs which have fallen from the tables of God's people during the last fifty years, three thousand schools have been established, in which two hundred and fifty thousand children have been instructed; the Bible has been translated into two hundred languages; "four thousand churches have been built, and two thousand ordained ministers, and more than seven thousand lay preachers and catechists have been sent forth among the heathen." And if so much

has been accomplished by what has cost so little, what might not the church have done during this time, had all her members acted like the early Christians, on the principle that none of the things which they possessed were their own, and as faithful stewards made such use of their Lord's goods as would best promote his cause? Had the Christians of America, during the thirty years in which they have been contributing the five millions of dollars that have resulted in transforming the Sandwich Islanders into a Christian people, instead of giving on an average less than fifty cents a year for the conversion of the world, given individually to the extent of real self-denial, there would have been ample means to send the written and the preached word to all the tribes of the earth. The church, then, has money enough, and men enough; and it is for want of neither of these that her work is not accomplished.

3. Nor is it to be ascribed to the mere sovereignty of God.

That God is a sovereign, is no more to be questioned than that he exists. Nor is it to be denied that it accords with his sovereign pleasure that the moral and religious condition of the world should be precisely what it is. And so, too, it accorded with his sovereign pleasure that Pharaoh should refuse to let the children of Israel go when commanded, and that the Jews should crucify the Messiah. But who would consider it a proper answer to the inquiry, why Pharaoh refused to let the children of Israel depart, or why the Jews put to death the Lord of glory, merely to be told that such

conduct was in accordance with the eternal and sovereign purpose of God. No more appropriate would such an answer be to our present inquiry. It would indeed be a *sufficient* answer, were the evangelization of the world solely and exclusively God's work, involving human instrumentality and responsibility as little as the creation of a world. But since God has associated man with him in this enterprise, and made its success to depend upon appropriate human efforts, it has a human as well as a divine side. And though, viewing it in the one aspect, it were enough to say, in answer to the inquiry why it is not accomplished, "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight," yet, viewing it in its other aspect, as a work for which man is responsible, to make such an answer to the inquiry would be as unscriptural and impious, as for Jonah to have answered the question why he fled to Tarshish, or for Ananias to have replied to the inquiry of Peter why he lied to the Holy Ghost, by pleading that such conduct was in accordance with God's sovereign pleasure. However it may accord with the inscrutable and eternal purpose of Him "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," that so large a portion of the earth should now be unevangelized, it does not accord with his express commands. And his will, as made known by his commands, and not his secret purpose, is our rule of duty. And as he has, by positive injunction, placed the church under obligations to evangelize the world, then it is in violation of known obligations that the world is not evangelized; and this neglect of duty is no more to be ascribed to the

mere sovereignty of God, than is any other sin of the church; and nothing but the rankest Antinomianism could be satisfied with such an answer to the inquiry under consideration.

The question still returns, Why is so large a portion of the earth unevangelized? Since the work of its entire evangelization is not impracticable; since the church has had adequate means to accomplish it; and since the acknowledged fact of God's sovereignty furnishes no just reason for its being delayed,—why has it not been accomplished? I answer, because the church has voluntarily and criminally neglected to use the means given her by God for its accomplishment. In explanation and proof of this, I observe,

1. In the first place, that the church for ages wholly lost sight of the true idea of her mission, and that a majority of her members as yet but partially apprehend it.

One great design of Christ in instituting a church, was, unquestionably, to provide for the publication of his gospel to those for whom he died, and for placing the blessings of salvation in the reach of all for whom they were purchased. Consequently he designed the church for a mission as comprehensive as his own, having the same sphere and objects that were embraced in his mission to our world. But did Christ contemplate in his mission a part only, or the whole of mankind? If we determine the sphere of his mission by the extent of the ruin which he came to repair, we shall not limit it, for it was not a *province*, but "the *whole world*" that lay "in wickedness." If we look at the design of his com-

ing, as disclosed by promises and predictions, we shall see that it had a relation as wide as the race: "In thy seed shall *all* the nations of the earth be blessed." Our text teaches that Christ was sent to provide salvation for the whole human family, without distinction of name or nation. "For God so loved the *world*, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And why should Christ be called "the Saviour of the *world*," "the propitiation for the sins of the *whole* world;" and why should an unlimited offer of salvation be made through him to the world, unless all mankind were contemplated in his mission? And the church being organized to carry out the designs of Christ's mission, her mission is nothing less than to publish salvation to all for whom he died.

And this accords with the instructions of our Saviour. "The field," says he, "is the world." And, when commissioning his disciples, he says, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." He designates no particular province or district as the sphere of their mission, but bids them go up and down the wide world which he had died to redeem, and proclaim to all who dwell upon it the messages of redeeming love. Christ himself here teaches what is the true mission of the church. It is to evangelize the world — the whole world.

And that he designed this to be her mission in all coming time, appears from the promise annexed to the command: "And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Whatever obli-

gations this command imposed upon the first Christians, it imposes upon us. Christianity is the same now, in its principles and designs, that it was then; and the world now "lieth in wickedness" as it did then: hence there exist now the same reasons for its evangelization, as when Christ commissioned his disciples to teach all nations. The obligations of the church to evangelize the nations, grow out of her relations to Christ and to the world, and are permanent. And they are as imperative on every member of the church, as are his obligations to love his brethren, to pray to God, or to obey any other command. I do not mean that every Christian is bound actually to go on a mission to the heathen; but that he is under solemn obligation either to go himself, or sustain, to the extent of his ability, by his contributions and prayers, those who go in his stead.

The disciples of Christ understood and acted upon this as the true idea of their mission. They regarded themselves as debtors both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, both to the wise, and to the unwise, and as bound as much as in them was, to preach the gospel to every creature. They did not regard their field as circumscribed by the walls of Jerusalem, nor as contained within the boundaries of Judea or Samaria, but as extending to the "uttermost parts of the earth," "and they took up the standard of the cross and bore it in triumph round the globe."

But not long after the primitive era, the church, corrupted by worldly alliances, lost sight of her mission, forgot her obligations to the heathen, and

virtually expunged from the record of authoritative precepts the Saviour's last command. However there may have been individuals who felt themselves bound by it, the church as a body felt no pressure of obligation to evangelize the world, and for centuries slept over her great concern. And instead of looking for her enlargement during this period of her inactivity, we should rather wonder that she did not become extinct.

Scarcely half a century has elapsed since she began to awake from this long sleep. And the partial recovery of the lost idea of her mission, has aroused all her branches to systematized efforts for the spread of the gospel, whose results, as seen in the evangelized islands of the Pacific; in the Christian schools and churches that in India, and other idolatrous countries, have sprung up by the side of heathen temples; and in the dawning of Christianity upon many portions of the benighted earth, indicate the state in which the world would have been, had the church never fallen into that sleep; or had she, at the commencement of the present century, generally and fully awaked to the true end of her existence, and prosecuted as her one great business, and with the combined strength of all her members, the enterprise of the world's evangelization. For at no time during this period has the church been possessed with the one great idea of her mission. At no time have all her members felt themselves bound by the Saviour's last command to do individually, according to their opportunity and ability, the work of a missionary. Is it probable that all, or even a majority of the members of any church connected

with this Missionary Association, regard themselves as acting under a commission that covers the entire world, and as bound to hold themselves ready to go into whatsoever part of it the providence of God shall send them ;—that they have ever so regarded the *world* as their field, as seriously to consider the relative claims of every portion of it upon their service ; and that the reason why they are now laboring and praying in New England, rather than toiling in India or Africa, is because, after prayerful deliberation, they became convinced, that this portion of the vineyard had the strongest claim upon them, and were persuaded that they could do more for the world's evangelization by remaining here, than by going any where else? Is it uncharitable to presume, that were a just sense of the obligations of Christians to the heathen, at once to get possession of all the members of these churches, very many of them would be possessed with an idea no less novel than important?

Thus the church has not realized the great end for which she exists. And this is one reason why she has done so little to accomplish it.

2. Another reason is found in her want of earnest piety.

While she has recognized to a considerable extent, *theoretically*, her obligations, and *practically*, so far as to form numerous and splendid schemes of Christian exertion, she has not possessed enough of the true missionary spirit to carry out her well-devised plans. The machinery of her missionary enterprise has moved feebly, and acccomplished but little in comparison with what it is capable of, were it

efficiently worked, for want of propelling power—the power that consists in earnest piety, such piety as called forth the energies of the primitive Christians.

(a) The great controlling element of their piety was *love to Christ*. Their lively apprehension of his transcendent excellence, and their deep sense of personal obligation to him, for the blessings of his grace, begat within them a love and devotion to him, that absorbed all regard for worldly honor or gain, and lifted them above all considerations of difficulty and danger, and led them to regard not life itself as too great a sacrifice to make for the honor of their Master. And nothing but the constraining influence of such love will ever lead men to labor faithfully, patiently and efficiently for Christ. But such love has not burned in the hearts of all, in every age, who have named the name of Christ. It is not now the absorbing affection, and the controlling principle of action in all believers. Christ is loved indeed, by all his true followers; but brethren, do we *all*, do *any* of us love him as Paul loved him?

(b) Love for souls was another element of their piety. They viewed the soul as ruined by sin, and destined to a miserable eternity, unless saved by the grace of the gospel. And they longed for its salvation. So deep was their solicitude for the spiritual state of man, that they warned them night and day, with tears. What evidence have Christians of later times generally given of such a passion for souls? How deeply are our sympathies wrought upon, as we contemplate the awful doom

to which the souls of the heathen are passing by twenty millions a year?

(c) The piety of the primitive Christians was also characterized by a spirit of self-denial and self-sacrifice. Nothing was too dear for them to give up for Christ. For his sake they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods; encountered perils by land, and by sea; endured weariness and painfulness, watchings and fastings, hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness, and "counted not even their lives dear unto themselves." And they gloried in tribulation, and rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ. Does this spirit characterize the piety of modern Christians? Are they generally willing to endure for Christ, if need be, poverty and reproach, persecution and death? Few indeed are now required to serve him at such cost. Yet obligations are resting upon all which cannot be discharged without some sacrifice. But what sacrifice are they actually making for the cause of Christ? What privations do they endure, to what hardships submit, that the heathen may be saved? They give, on an average, less than *fifty cents* a year. Is that making a sacrifice? Does it subject them to suffering? No, nor to inconvenience. And yet *that* is the *sacrifice*, that the great mass of American Christians make for the spread of the gospel! O, how do Christians in our day, dwelling in ceiled houses, enjoying the comforts and luxuries of wealth, and giving of their abundance a few cents, or at the most a few dollars, in fulfillment of the Saviour's last command;—how do such Christians compare with those who, in obeying the

same command, had "trial of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment; who were stoned, who were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; who wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented?"

(d) Another element of the piety of these self-denying men, was a deep sense of dependence on God. They believed that of themselves they could do nothing, and that all their sufficiency was of God;—that whoever planted, and whoever watered, God must give the increase. And they accordingly sought, in frequent and earnest prayer, the divine blessing on their labors. Do Christians now possess this same spirit of dependence in such a degree as to lead them to pray daily for the blessing of God on missionary efforts? What does their attendance upon the monthly concert indicate?

In these and other elements of primitive piety, the modern church is greatly deficient. And this is one reason why she has no better discharged her obligations to the heathen.

Thus, while the church has had ample means to evangelize the world, she has neglected to employ them, partly for want of a just idea of her mission, and partly for want of the spirit requisite to accomplish such a mission. Then is it not the fault of the church, that the world is not evangelized? And as she is responsible for the consequences of her neglect, who can estimate the amount of guilt she has contracted, while the millions she might have enlightened, have been going down to their graves in all the darkness of heathenism.

Far be it from me to disparage what has been done, and is now doing for the conversion of the world. The missionary enterprise is an honor to the church, and is the glory of our age. And the results already attained are such as to command the admiration of the world. But if so much has been accomplished, without any sacrifice, or even inconvenience, on the part of Christians generally, what might we not have beheld to-day, had all the resources of the church been employed in this enterprise?

And now, what is wanting for the speedy evangelization of the world, but for the church to take hold of the work with all her strength; and carry it forward with all the means at her command—amply sufficient with God's blessing for its accomplishment.

And for this, it is necessary that Christians more generally awake to the true idea of their mission. They should feel that their business here, is not to acquire wealth or honor, nor live in luxury and indolence, but to labor for the conversion of the world. Viewing the world as their field, they should regard themselves as placed under imperative obligations, by the Saviour's last command as well as by every principle of their religion, to labor for its entire subjugation to Christ.

And they should cherish a deep sense of the transcendent importance of their mission. They should look upon the world in all the magnitude and extent of its ruins; contemplate its heathen millions in the light of God's word, as under sentence of eternal death and hastening to receive their doom,

and yet as capable of being saved through the grace of Christ; and realize that their mission is nothing less than to make known to them the provisions of eternal love, to save them from impending wrath, and raise them to heaven's eternal glory and felicity; —that their mission partakes of the importance and grandeur of Christ's mission to our world.

And they should also possess, in full measure, the earnest piety which characterized the primitive Christians. Their hearts should burn with love to Christ. They should have deep sympathy for man, degraded, ruined man. And under the constraining influence of these heaven-born affections, they should be willing to sacrifice life, if need be, for the glory of Christ, and the salvation of man. They should "elevate their thoughts and purposes above the current of this world's influences, and associate them with the great objects of the mediatorial reign; and with the scenes and destinies of eternity, in which that reign will be consummated." And withal, they should have a strength of faith that will yield to no discouragement, and can be shaken by no obstacles;—such an assurance of the final triumph of the Redeemer's kingdom, that they will no more admit the possibility of failure, than they will question the veracity of God.

Let the church, in all her branches, and in all her members, apprehend her true mission, and be pervaded by a piety like this, and she will cheerfully consecrate to God, in the work of man's salvation, her talents and learning, her wealth and influence. Her sons, nurtured in her bosom into sympathy with Christ, will stand ready by hundreds and by thou-

sands, to forsake all for his name's sake, and go to the ends of the earth, to make known to perishing men the tidings of salvation. Her silver and her gold will be cheerfully, and without solicitation, cast into the treasury of the Lord. She will lift to heaven, unitedly and unceasingly, the voice of her supplications, for the blessing of God upon her instrumentalities. Quickened by such piety, she will feel the pulsations of a new life; and starting from her sluggish repose, she will move forward with irresistible energy and might, to the accomplishment of her glorious mission. And then will she "look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." Then will the triumphs of the cross be multiplied. Then will the standard of the gospel be raised in every land, and the announcement of God's love to the world be made to all that dwell upon the earth.

> "Then shall mankind no more in darkness mourn;
> Then happy nations in a day be born;
> From east to west God's glorious Name be one,
> And one pure worship hail th' eternal Son:
> Remotest realms one spotless faith unite,
> And o'er all regions beam the gospel's light."

And then shall the world that now "lieth in wickedness," "be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." And we shall be blessed in proportion as our labors and charities and prayers contribute to the ushering in of this day of millennial glory.

ANNUAL MEETING.

The Thirty-first Annual Meeting of the Palestine Missionary Society, was held at Randolph, June 18, 1851.

The public services commenced at 11 o'clock, A. M., when a sermon was preached by Rev. James P. Terry; the Treasurer's report presented, with the Auditor's certificate; and addresses offered by Rev. Messrs. Worcester and Walker, as a deputation from the Parent Society.

Voted, That the Treasurer's report be accepted.

Voted, That the thanks of this Society be presented to Rev. Mr. Terry, for his sermon, and that a copy of it be requested for publication.

Voted, That the thanks of this Society be presented to Rev. Messrs. Worcester and Walker, for their aid on this occasion; to the First Church and Society in Randolph, for their hospitality; and to the choir of singers, for their performances.

The following officers were chosen for the current year:

GEN. BENJAMIN KING, *President.*

MR. JOSIAH W. KINGMAN,
DEA. JONATHAN NEWCOMB, } *Vice Presidents.*

REV. JONAS PERKINS, *Secretary.*

EBENEZER ALDEN, M. D., *Treasurer.*

SILAS PAINE, ESQ., *Auditor.*

TREASURER'S REPORT.

Receipts from June 18, 1850, to June 18, 1851.

Abington, First Parish, legacy, Edward Cobb, . . .	$750 00
" " Gent. 72,92; La. 45,70; m. c. 31,38;	150 00
" South Parish, S. V.	3 00
" East Parish, Gent. 33; La. 22,62; . . .	55 62
Braintree, First Parish, Ladies' miss. so. 50,02; m. c. 65; R. S. S. 15;	130 02
" South Parish, Juv. so. 15; Gent. and La. 41; .	56 00
Braintree and Weymouth, Union so. 55,53; m. c. 34,61; .	90 14
Cohasset, D. S. Sutton, ...	10 00
East Bridgewater, Trin. so. D. W. 10; m. c. 15; . .	25 00
East and West Bridgewater, Un. so. m. c.	14 43
Hanover, m. c.	20 00
North Bridgewater, Two Friends, ...	40 00
" " First Parish, Gent. and La. . . .	22 00
" " South Parish, Gent. and La. . . .	52 00
" " Porter Evan. so. Gent. and La. 153,58; m. c. 55;	208 58
Randolph, First Parish, Gent. 94,69; La. 35,28; m. c. 83,23;	213 20
" East Parish, Gent. 48,27; La. 62; m. c. 24,85; Young La. 14,48; Juv. miss. so. 5,31; . .	154 91
Scituate, North, Gent. and La.	21 75
Weymouth, North Parish, Gent. and La.	88 62
" South Parish, Gent. and La. 62,76; m. c. 26,25; Rev. J. P. T. 2;	91 01
" Union ch. and so. m. c.	25 00
	$2,221 28

EBENEZER ALDEN, *Treasurer.*

I have examined the accounts of the Treasurer of the Palestine Missionary Society for the past year, and find them rightly cast and properly vouched.

SILAS PAINE, *Auditor.*

RANDOLPH, June 18, 1851.

4 13 1/2

REV. MR. RUSSELL'S SERMON

BEFORE THE

Palestine Missionary Society,

1857.

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THE DUTY OF CHRISTIANS TO PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL PERSONALLY.

A

DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

7533.3

PALESTINE MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF NORFOLK COUNTY,

AT THEIR

THIRTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD AT

EASTON, MASS., JUNE 17, 1857.

BY REV. E. RUSSELL,
Pastor of the Winthrop Church in Randolph.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

BOSTON:
PRESS OF T. R. MARVIN & SON, 42 CONGRESS STREET.
1857.

DISCOURSE.

JOHN IV. 39.

AND MANY OF THE SAMARITANS OF THAT CITY BELIEVED ON HIM FOR THE SAYING OF THE WOMAN, WHICH TESTIFIED, HE TOLD ME ALL THAT EVER I DID.

In the natural world, the causes which are the most powerful and permanent in their results, lie often the most unnoticed, or the most concealed from human view. The torrent, rushing from the slopes and the mountain heights from which its waters are collected, and bearing away in its course the works of human industry and skill, soon spends its force; and what is displaced by its violence returns to its position, or finds a resting-place in the vale below. The lightning, leaping from the cloud, scathes the oak, and prostrates in death some of the flock or the herd, with their owner himself by their side. The cause and the effect are alike palpable and obvious. They are not concealed. They are not unnoticed. But the power that propels the orbs of heaven, the earth on which we tread, in their diurnal and annual courses, is both unfelt and unseen. The cause which clothes the woodlands with their foliage and the fields with their attire of living green, and

strips and lays them bare again for the winding-sheet of winter, arrests not the attention often, and awakens no thought. The affinities, the powers, the causes, which play such a part in all the phenomena of animal and vegetable life, like the mighty forces that guide and propel the planetary train, are noiseless, still, and speak not of their movements to human ears unschooled to their music. Without research, the most intense and protracted often, they elude detection and lie buried, where He whose "glory it is to conceal a thing," has left them to work out their stupendous results before the eyes of all.

In the moral world, analogy would lead us to look for a similar method of action on the part of God, while we are all inclined to stop short, and rest in the visible and palpable alone. When the inquiry is, who have left the deepest impressions of their existence on the mass of human mind by their feelings and actions, our attention naturally turns to the statesmen, the warriors, the poets, and orators of the world. They have, indeed, given direction to the current of human thoughts and events. The temporal fate of individuals and of nations, has been often hinged on their action. The effects of their action were visible, and what seemed to be the causes too, and hence the place which their names occupy in the history of our world, and the halo with which their memory is surrounded.

But the most powerful, permanent, and salutary influences, that affect individuals and communities, can, for the most part, be referred to no such

source. The efficient cause, with the instrumentalities, that result in the renewal of the heart unto holiness, in case of the individual, or of any number in a community of human beings, is too humble or obscure to attract the world's attention. It is concealed and still, as the mighty agencies that effect the perpetual renovation and decay of the animal and vegetable worlds; it is as unseen and noiseless as the forces that impel the orbs, that move as on the lightning's wing in the eternal depths of the heavens.

The facts in the life of the individual to whom reference is made in the text, will, we presume, in your estimate, more than justify these allusions. The Judgment, we have no doubt, will disclose many similar sketches in our world's history. In this case, no human monument was reared to perpetuate the memory of the actor, no volumes written in which the details of the life and character of the woman at the well are portrayed. Inspiration, however, has done for her the work. Its sketches are brief. An outline only is given. But its monument is more enduring than the marble or the brass. She was touched, waked, subdued. Her life of sin was loathed, shunned. The attractions and charms of the Stranger at the well were felt and loved. She breathed in a new world of affection and aim, of beauty and glory. She could but speak what she felt, the surprise that she experienced, and utter the wonders revealed to her view. 'He told me all that ever I did,' was the brief story of her narrative. It startled, it appalled. As I aimed to change the topic of conversation

to the old and controverted theme,—the place of worship,—He brought home to my thoughts the omnipresence and spirituality of the everlasting God. His presence is not limited to the mountains of Gerizim and Zion, or to the magnificent temples that crown their heights. He has no local habitation. The heaven of heavens, indeed, cannot contain him. He encompasses our path and our lying down, and from his presence we cannot go, and from his Spirit we cannot flee. Those who worship him, therefore, must do it in spirit and in truth. 'He told me all that ever I did; is not this the Christ?' I believe it. I feel it. My life, as you know, has been disreputable. I regret it. I abandon it. I feel the stir of new impulses and new aims. 'Come and see a man which told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ? And many of the Samaritans of that city,' is the statement, 'believed on him, *for the saying of the woman*, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.' We have here no option. All the facts in this history converge in this theme, and present us with the following proposition:—*It is the duty of the Christian to proclaim the gospel* PERSONALLY, *and do his utmost to bring men to Christ.*

Let not the language of this proposition awaken surprise. In it there is nothing more included, than what is found in this scene at the well, and at the neighboring village. We mean, therefore, precisely what the language itself implies, and what it is our intention to prove before we shall have dismissed the subject. We therefore repeat, in a varied form, the statement, that it is as much the

duty of every Christian to proclaim the gospel *personally*, to state its terms, its conditions, and do his utmost to bring men to Christ, as it is that of any pastor or accredited teacher of Christianity, who stands at the altar with the ensigns of heaven in his hands. The woman at the well did this. Waked to a new life of affection and aim, grieving over her past course, and turning from it with aversion, she rehearsed in the ears of her neighbors the story of the change, and urged them to Him who had opened on her vision this new world of light and beauty and glory. She proclaimed the gospel *personally*. She did her utmost to bring men to Christ. It was not in vain. Her course was noiseless, still. There was no pomp—no display. All was sincere, truthful, heartfelt, earnest, and yet modest and unassuming. Her influence, though quiet and unobtrusive, and unseen or unnoticed by the world, was more powerful and permanent and matchless in its results, than the forces that propel the orbs of heaven. Many of that city, is the affirmation, were touched and transformed by its power. Whatever facilities or powers, therefore, any Christian possesses, whatever resources may be at his disposal, he is under an obligation as strong and as lasting, to devote, and devote as entirely and sacredly to this work, as was this woman at the well, or the first teachers of Christianity.

We do not mean by this, that every Christian is to select a text, write out his sermon, and deliver it in some public assembly. These are not the kind of sermons which it is the duty of

every one to preach. This is not the only or the most effectual method of accomplishing the work. Still it is the duty of every Christian, in his sphere, to proclaim the gospel *personally*, and do his utmost to bring men to Christ. His conversation should utter it. The waterpots should occasionally be left, to engage in it. His example should be a palpable demonstration of the power of revealed truth; his holy life should be one standing sermon. The Christian parent is under obligation to perform this service for his children, and to give, in this respect, the line upon line, and the precept upon precept. In the most intimate relations of life, this work is never to be left unperformed. In this way, the Christian is to state the conditions and explain the nature of the salvation by the cross to friends, to neighbors, to the church of God of which he is a member, to those with whom he has intercourse in the marts of business, and to strangers, as the providence of God may bring them in his way and furnish him with the opportunity. He is to appropriate property to this work. He is to study, think and plan for this object, and exert himself for this purpose. Sloth and stupidity are to be banished, and sin crucified—and they will be, if he be a Christian indeed—that he may be efficient and successful. In the prosecution of this desire, he is to allow no obstacle to oppose a successful resistance. Persecution, though it may be permitted to change the sphere of his exertions, yet it must never be allowed to arrest them. The pains of the rack, and the fires of the stake, must not, and will not, and cannot abate the ardor of a gen-

uine zeal, or suspend the efforts of a genuine devotion. They will be met, if met they must be, with the pleasing anticipation of their increasing the weight of eternal glory, and brightening the lustre of the unfading crown. Death itself has a thousand times been met in its most terrific forms, in the firm assurance that He who sits enthroned in the heavens would bring good out of the evil; would overrule it to the utter dismay and confusion of enemies; and make it the means, as it has been, of lighting up for others a pathway to the skies.

Such is the meaning of our proposition. This is what is implied in the obligation of the Christian to proclaim the gospel *personally*, and do his utmost to bring men to Christ. It is to be done in person. What belongs to the Christian, cannot be delegated to another. There is for him no substitute. He himself must do whatever of this work belongs to him, or the obligation will remain forever undischarged. Now is this proposition true? Can it be proved and settled with the certainty attending a demonstration? This is the question now before us.

1. We infer its truth first, from the very nature itself of the gospel of Christ. It supposes this duty or obligation to rest on the Christian. The very nature of the new and divine life in the heart of the Christian, requires him to proclaim the gospel, and do his utmost to bring men to Christ. What is Christianity itself, I ask? It does not consist in creeds and confessions. Forms of worship, however splendid and imposing, do not con-

stitute it. The world might be filled with Bibles and Missionary Associations, and yet not one spark of the heavenly flame exist. It is not found in books and on parchments. These cannot think, feel, will. They are nothing but conventional symbols. A collection of men, with their temples of resort on Gerizim or Zion, and with their modish rituals, do not constitute it. These may all exist in their symmetry and form, as does the body, after the spirit that once animated it has fled.

In this world, Christianity has its seat, and its seat only, in the affections—in the hearts of men. It consists in love, in disinterested love or benevolence, in supreme love to God, the greatest and best of beings, and in a love for men, as creatures of God, which acknowledges their rights, and regards their claims as sacred and as inviolable as our own. It consists in a vital union with Christ, in an attachment to him that transcends all other regards. Christianity lives in the affections, sways the affections, gives direction to the thoughts, purifies the intentions and controls all the purposes of the internal man. Christ's kingdom is a spiritual kingdom, invisible, intangible indeed, yet real and within the man. It consists in righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; not in word, but in power. In the heart of the woman at the well, the first young pulse of the Christian life that played, was love. The scales fell, and she saw in the matchless stranger, beauty, attraction, charm. Its glory, she felt, would not be diminished by being beheld. It led her to forget

her water-pot; it opened her mouth; it loosed her tongue; and her words, baptized in this eternal fountain of beauty, and excellence, and glory, touched and subdued many a heart among the villagers with whom she lived. Now we infer, from the very nature of these new affections which sway the Christian, the truth of our proposition. The very nature of these new desires, joys, hopes and aims, will lead the subject of them to active exertions. It is not possible that principles so active and all-pervading in their control, should exist in the heart, and not be developed in the actions and the life. The subject of them cannot but desire, and cannot but act for the extension of that kingdom which he feels in his own bosom.

What is the nature and what are the developments of the parental affection? Is it not the very nature of this affection to find delight in exertions made for the promotion of the good of its object? Is it not benevolent, active, watchful? Does it not warm the heart, quicken the thoughts, loose the tongue, and open the hand, in nameless acts of kindness and love? Is it not restless, sleepless, if there be an infant cry unhushed, or an infant want unsupplied? Under the smiles and healthful glees of childhood, are not the heavens themselves to it brighter, the earth greener, and the current of life itself deeper and smoother in its flow? If the eyelids of the object of this affection are closed in death, does not every heart-string quiver with anguish, and the heavens themselves become wrapped in gloom? Can a parent exist, with a parent's heart, and not desire, and follow

up this desire, in action for the welfare of the child? Is not the same true of the filial affection? Does not a love for the parents, whom we venerate, lead us to respect their character, consult their wishes, and engage in action for the promotion of their happiness? Does not the very nature of the filial affection lead to such results? Can a man, then, be a genuine believer, pardoned, renewed, regenerated by the eternal Spirit, waked to the beauties of holiness and the attractions of the cross, and not be willing to proclaim the gospel *personally*, and do his utmost to bring men to Christ? Is not the obligation upon him? Does not the nature of the thing itself prove, nay, demonstrate its existence?

How does the mere love of knowledge often concentrate the efforts of the scholar, and awaken all his energies in the career of acquisition or discovery? He gathers into the store-house of memory words, their forms, their inflections, their derivations, their peculiarities, the laws of their structure, and combination in sentences; and for months and years, solitary and alone, pursues his wearisome toil, till the treasures of languages, spoken by men of other nations, or of other nations and generations of men long since dead, are laid at his feet. His industry and application become habitual. He loves it. It is his life, and he is uneasy and restless if the work of acquisition be suspended. The mathematician of Syracuse was so delighted and engrossed with his favorite pursuit, as not to be diverted from it by the siege which the enemies of his country were conducting

against his native city, nor even to be disturbed by the soldier that transfixed him to the earth in the very act of solving a problem.

But is it possible, that the mere love of knowledge, or of distinction, which but too often is the only spring of the scholar's exertions, should be more controlling in its influence than the attachment of the Christian to Christ? Tongues will cease, and knowledge vanish; but what is to undermine and crumble the Christian's throne, or fade the crown that he is to wear forever? Is not his inheritance incorruptible, immortal? And should not his love for that in which it consists, and spreads out for it the everlasting foundations, be correspondingly intense, and know no abatement from the allurements and temptations of earth?

What, again, does not the passion for wealth, or the love of gain accomplish, among the men whose portion is below? What hardships does it not constrain them to endure? what oceans does it not traverse, and the dangers of what climes does it not encounter? It exposes its victim to the fervors of scorching sands and burning climes, and anon hurries him into the midst of the frozen zones, under the very tail of the northern bear, where nothing meets the eye but wastes of eternal snows, and nothing greets the ear but the crashing of the icebergs and the minstrelsy of the winds and the waves. And when the question is asked, Why is all this? the reply is, It is the nature of this passion. They love little else; they know little else. It is the very life of those who are led spell-bound by its sway. And ought it not, I ask, to be the

very life of the Christian to proclaim the gospel *personally*—if need be, amidst hardships and dangers—and do his utmost to bring men to Christ? The water-pot was forgotten by the woman of Samaria, to engage in it. The disciples of Jerusalem, that were scattered abroad by persecution, went every-where, preaching the word. Faith, it is said, cometh by hearing; and the question is asked, How shall they hear without a preacher? and also, How shall they preach, except they be sent? The final charge of the ascending Redeemer to the representatives of the sacramental host, was, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." And by the primitive believers was not this duty performed, in the face of mockery and dungeons, and death itself? Was it not their life? Was it by them ever abandoned, till their clayey tabernacles crumbled and fell, and the heavens, as in the case of Stephen, opened on their vision?

Distinguished painters, in the last moments of life, we are told, have often been known to have their thoughts employed in sketching their ideal forms of beauty and grandeur, and that endless variety of expression in the human countenance, indicative of thought and feeling, which, while in health, they had flung upon the breathing, speaking canvas. It was their business, while in health; it engrossed their thoughts; they loved it; and their visions of ideal beauty and grandeur hovered and played around them in death. So is it with the living Christian. We have ourselves been acquainted with one, who, for some two years

before her death, was led frequently to rise in the night time, for the perusal of the Bible, and for the purposes of prayer and thanksgiving to God. There was all the while a peculiar solicitude for the salvation of men; and often, to one and another, was the kind word uttered, of the reasonableness of the terms of salvation, and of the preciousness of the redemption by Christ. We stood by her dying bed. While the cold sweat of death was standing on her brow, we saw her take leave of her partner, kiss with a smile the little ones to be left behind. She then turned to us, and inquired—and it was but a few moments before she breathed her last breath—whether any more of those whom she then knew to be under conviction of sin, had indulged hope in Christ.

Thus, the truth of our proposition is obvious, from the very nature of the new and divine life in the bosom of the Christian. In the mortal hour, when in entire possession of his mental powers, this life of the believer closes

> "As sets the morning star,
> Which goes not down behind the darkening west,
> Or hides itself in clouds, but sinks away
> Into the light of heaven."

2. We infer the truth of our proposition again, from the social nature of man. Man cannot, from his very constitution, live alone in reference to any thing that deeply stirs his feelings, and becomes the object of his desires and his aims. And we apprehend that sufficient attention has not been given by the church of God to our social structure, in the work of diffusing the blessings of the gos-

pel of Christ in our world. All the instrumentalities of God's appointment for the extension of his kingdom on earth, are based on the social element in our mental constitution. The Sabbath, the solemn assembly, the public prayer, the song of praise, and the spoken word, all appeal through this social nature to the hearts and the consciences of men. On the basis of this constitution, God hath set the earth in families, and made this social nature the instrument of teaching man some of the noblest lessons that come home on his mind and heart. He hath set the world in neighborhoods, communities, nations, for the purpose of developing mind and heart in the direction of its immortal destiny. The action of this element of our common humanity in Christ himself, and the whole body of primitive believers, was a marked feature of their lives. The great Teacher himself ate and drank like other men; like others, mingled with society; engaged in social intercourse in the domestic circle; with strangers, as at the well; and was proverbially designated by enemies, as the friend of publicans and sinners. It was strictly in social intercourse that he imparted to his disciples the most touching of all his lessons to man. Thus was it with his disciples themselves. They went every-where. They preached the word every-where. They went from house to house. Thus did the woman in our text. She went to the circle of her acquaintance and neighbors, and told what her social nature itself impelled her to utter, and told it in circumstances best of all adapted to make and leave an impression on those who knew her. And there are few,

doubtless, who, when they come to scan the influences that have exerted the most power in shaping the feelings and conduct of their lives, will not be compelled to refer them to the more private and social action of other minds and hearts upon themselves.

The human mind, when overwhelmed with sorrow and anguish, as the result of this constitution, seeks for social intercourse, and calls aloud for sympathy. The Saviour himself did it, in his agony in the garden. And men, be their characters what they may, unless eaten and devoured by avarice, find themselves impelled to this social action and intercourse in all the conduct of life. It is to the world of mind and heart, what the attraction of cohesion or of gravitation is to the matter of the material universe around us. Let the heart of man, therefore, become regenerated by the power of the eternal Spirit; let the mind be awake to the beauties of holiness and the attractions of the cross; let it become a temple for the indwelling of the infinite and lofty One; let it be led, taught, moulded by the Spirit, as every truly regenerate heart is led and taught; and we infer, from the social nature itself of man, the duty of the Christian to proclaim the gospel *personally*, and do his utmost to bring sinners to Christ. All the elements of that nature must become dwarfed, or suffer a revulsion without it. Paul himself, and Luther, and Knox, and Martyn, and Chalmers, and the whole band of the devoted missionaries of the cross, without it, could have had no name in the church of God on earth, and left behind them

no light of beauty and glory to cheer the world, as their suns went down.

3. Again, we infer the truth of our proposition from the character of the great Author of Christianity itself. And what is the spirit that marks, in burnished capitals, the whole mission of the Son of God to our world? Was it not that of a self-moved and sovereign benevolence? Was it not, in its very nature, and in all its circumstances, self-moved and aggressive? Why did he lay aside his glory, and veil his Godhead in humanity? It was love for a ruined world that impelled him, and such love as no human understanding can comprehend, or imagination conceive. Why was his birth so humble, and yet so august; his life one of such self-denial, and so much of it passed away from the scrutiny of the public gaze? Why, as at the temple, among the learned of the nation, and at the age of twelve years, and in the miracles which he wrought, did occasional flashes of the great reality in respect to his character, dignity and origin, reach even the bigoted and unbelieving, and compel a reluctant assent to his claims? Why were his instructions so pointed, practical and comprehensive, in the principles of moral action which they involve? The poor, the widow, the fatherless, the oppressed, the bereaved, the serious inquirer, and the contrite, always shared in the sympathies of his bosom. He was incessant in preaching the word. He commissioned others to do the same work, in all the towns and villages of Judea. He both allowed and encouraged his friends to speak of him, and bring others to his notice and his

presence for his blessing. He rebuked his disciples, when they discouraged even children from coming to him, and sharing in his attentions and favor. 'He went about doing good.' In the domestic circle, as at Bethany—by the wayside, as at the well—no opportunity was neglected. Nights were passed on the mountains in prayer, while others reposed.

What was the meaning of his urging his followers so constantly and so earnestly to let their light shine? Why that submission to the outrages of an incensed rabble, and the fiendish contempt of a godless priesthood? Why those tears on the brow of Olivet over a city doomed, that agony of the garden, that inhuman scourging, that fainting on the way to the cross, that suspension on the ragged spikes, that darkness, that awful stillness that reigned from the sixth to the ninth hour, when the dying shriek was uttered, and the rending of the veil, the earthquakes and the rising of the dead followed? Did not the centurion, under whose direction the crucifixion itself took place, believe and proclaim the gospel, when he exclaimed, smiting on his breast, 'Truly this was the Son of God?' Did he not do something in the work of bringing that Roman band to Christ? And can the Christian stand by the cross of his Redeemer, and be in doubt as to the return that is demanded of him? What does he possess, that he should not freely consecrate to this work? What has he, that he can lawfully withhold? What is there, after feeling that all this was for him, that his heart will allow him to withhold? He may be

an unbelieving professor of religion, but a Christian he cannot be. The Christian has the spirit of Christ in the prevailing temper of his mind; and he who has it not, is none of his. We infer, therefore, from the character of the great Founder of Christianity itself, that all his followers will proclaim the gospel *personally*, and do their utmost to bring men to Christ.

4. We infer the same truth, finally, from the responsibilities assumed in a profession of religion. In this act, the Christian enters into a solemn covenant with God, the church of Christ, and the world. In a solemn and thoughtful hour, he stands forth, and calls heaven and earth to witness his oath, that he will love the Lord Jesus Christ better than father, or mother, or life; that he will consecrate himself, body, and mind, and heart, for time and eternity, to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that he will watch over his own intentions, character and conduct, do good as he has opportunity, live a life of prayer, and walk with God. I ask, then, is it possible for the professor of religion, after taking this solemn oath—and he certainly could promise no more and no less—not to be under an obligation to proclaim the gospel *personally*, and do his utmost to bring men to Christ? We certainly are so incurably blind, it may be, that we can see no method of escaping the conclusion; and the Christian, we are sure, can have no disposition to elude or evade it. He loves it, and in it he finds his highest life.

And now, if all this be so, what do our American churches need? They have wealth, intelli-

gence, learning. The whole world is opened before them. The sighs of perishing millions come borne to them on every wind of heaven. The earth is crowded with a thousand millions of human beings, and once in every twenty-eight years, a thousand millions, according to the basis on which life assurances are made, pass to the scenes, the retributions of the eternal world. More than two millions a month, wrap about them the drapery of the grave, and wake where change in character and condition never comes. The soul itself, is immortal, its value priceless, its redemption precious. In the case of a single sinner that repents, the angels of God rejoice and fill all the arches of heaven with song. The agonies of the garden and the dying shrieks of the cross, utter in every ear the immortal worth of the soul. The weeping Saviour, on the brow of Olivet, speaks to all his followers, in awful emphasis, of the catastrophe that overtakes the lost soul. What, then, does every man and woman in our churches need? Is it not the spirit that led her at the well to forget her water-pot, and go and state in the ears of her neighbors and acquaintance what she had heard, and felt, and learned? And would not this spirit change our churches, and soon change our world? I know that Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but that it is God who giveth the increase. And thanks be to his name that he does. He will. It is his changeless purpose thus to do, and everlasting thanks be to his name. I know that God is a sovereign, that he does as he pleases, that man is in every way and in every sense dependent upon him; but when the

highway robber and murderer can commit their acts of enormity and outrage, and plead the sovereignty of God in abatement of the guilt of their violence and blood, then may an apathy in our churches—if any exist—stand excused. But otherwise never, never. The Christian is, by supposition, regenerated by the eternal Spirit, born again, in a new world of light and life and joy; he is the temple of the living God, and influenced, guided, by the eternal Spirit. If he proclaims the gospel *personally*, and does his utmost to bring sinners to Christ, he is in sympathy with the Godhead, a coworker with Christ, and, in the hands of the Spirit, is himself the seal that makes and leaves the impression.

There is, then, in no way and no form, any excuse for apathy or indifference here. Almost every recent instance of hopeful conversion, in our churches in this vicinity, is but an illustration of the theme before us. The influence that was effectual, that touched and renewed, the human agency in it, was by the community unfelt and unseen. It was noiseless, still. Yet, the eternal Spirit that led it, as in the case of the Samaritans that believed for the saying of the woman, reached and transformed the heart. The world heard not the prayers as they were uttered,—that went up from the haystack, from Mills and his companions. To the world, they were as concealed or unnoticed as the forces that propel the orbs of heaven. Yet now, they are traced in the whole work of modern missions. The spot, itself, has been marked as the Bethel of the churches. And the influence of that

sainted one and his companions, though then noiseless and still, like the movements of the planetary train, is seen to-day, after the lapse of half a century, crowding with new worshipers from pagan lands the mount of vision and of song. There is for the action, which the text enjoins, every encouragement which a living faith can demand. The Sandwich Islands have become a Christian nation. Last year, $40,000 were appropriated by the government for the support of common schools, and $20,000 for the endowment of a college. They support, in almost every case, the pastors of their own churches, besides contributing men and money to carry the gospel to the thousand islands of the Pacific sea. India, with its one hundred and fifty millions of human beings, is in a state of transition. The hold of idolatry, is fast loosening. The land of Assyria has been retouched, and the waters of the Tigris warble to new music as they flow. The Nestorians are a changed people, and the Spirit of God, as in our own New England, heretofore, has been poured out upon them. The beautiful empire of Turkey, where the human race was cradled, matchless in its climate, exhaustless in its soil and rich in sacred and classic memories, feels an unwonted stir; and the waters of the golden horn, blend with their ripples and the muezzin's call to prayer, the notes of thanksgiving and praise to the living God. Aintab is clothed, and beginning to assume its right mind. And the trees of the Taurus and of Lebanon, are already moved by the impulses of new winds. And further, the time is approaching when all the commerce of the burn-

ing Orient, will doubtless pass through the channel of the Red sea, over the isthmus of Suez and across the blue waters of the Mediterranean and the Ægean, through the straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, to the millions of Northern and Central Europe. How important is it, that the seed of the word should be cast into this field, where millions on millions, in centuries to come, must, in the providence of God, see the light and pass their human duration. This work is already begun. And the Spirit of the living God has descended and his glory been seen as when the cloud overshadowed the tabernacle and temple of the tribes.

In no spirit of boasting, do we speak of the race of the Saxons. They are not what they should be. Yet to-day their sway over twelve millions of square miles on the earth's surface, is undisputed. This position in reference to the world's destiny, is not unmeaning. The empire of Great Britain alone, has more than eight millions of square miles in all her dependencies. Since 1820, her population has doubled. Between 1819 and 1855, she contributed three millions and a half of immigrants to the population of the Canadas and the United States, besides all that have gone forth to India and Australia. In Catholic France, the condition of things is entirely different. During this course of years, her population has been either stationary or diminishing. The past year, the deaths exceeded the births by some tens of thousands. Is not the hand of God in all this unexampled increase, prosperity and sway of the Saxon race? Is it not without a par-

allel in the history of our world, out-stripping, in extent of territory and all the elements of national power and greatness, the magnificent dominions of Charles the Fifth of Spain? With a language to be spoken in coming generations by so many millions of earth's population, vigorous, flexible, copious, and a literature, studied, rich, profound in all that pertains to a thorough development of mind, and the preparation of the soul for its immortal destiny, what may not be anticipated in reference to its part in the great work of the world's spiritual renovation?

Jeremiah Evarts once said to a friend, he hoped the time would come, when the American Board would expend ten thousand dollars a year on its missions. Twenty-five thousand dollars a month now, will not sustain them without subjecting them to injurious restrictions. Besides, the time is at hand, probably, when what is thought and felt in Canton, will be known at the end of the hour in New York and Boston. Is there not every encouragement to faith, and facility furnished for activity and zeal, in the work of bringing men to Christ? Let the moral forces that impelled the heart of the believer at the well, reign in the bosom of every ostensible Christian—though silent and unnoticed by the world—yet its results would soon fill earth and fill heaven with more wonders, and with more audible and sweeter music, than the movements of the spheres.

REMARKS OF REV. MR. SCHNEIDER.

Mr. Schneider, in his remarks, gave a brief history of the missionary work in Aintab, Syria, and its vicinity. Though there was no pre-concerted plan between him and the preacher, his statements seemed to be a practical illustration of the principles laid down in the sermon; and both together appeared to be a more complete exhibition of the subject.

He remarked, that Aintab was situated in the extreme northern part of Syria, near the borders of the ancient Cilicia, about 400 miles north of Jerusalem, about 120 from Antioch, and about 800 from Constantinople. Its inhabitants number 30,000, of whom 20,000 are Mussulmans, and 10,000 Armenians. The efforts of the missionaries have been directed towards the reformation of the Armenians; and it has pleased the great Head of the church greatly to bless their labors.

Before the missionaries had reached Aintab, Bibles and tracts, in considerable quantities, had been forwarded thither. The circulation of these books at once awakened a spirit of inquiry among the Armenians. A pious Armenian ecclesiastic, converted through the influence of the missionaries, afterwards went to the place; and by his efforts in public, and his labors from house to house, gave a powerful impulse to that inquiry. The enemies of the truth, however, did not suffer him long to remain. They instigated the Governor to send him away, which he did. One immediate effect of his labors was this: a regular petition was

drawn up, signed by some fifteen of the most substantial Armenians, formally requesting a missionary to preach the gospel to them. Consequently, one was sent. But the hostility of opposers did not suffer him to remain longer than a few days. Three missionaries succeeded him, two of whom remained permanently. The opposition of the priesthood and others was very great, and the most strenuous efforts were made to hinder, check and crush the work. But, amid all these opposing influences, it went forward steadily and powerfully; often, indeed, with such rapidity and power as amazed the missionaries.

The spirit of inquiry was very extensive and active. In the house and by the way, in the streets and market-places, in the fields and gardens and vineyards, or wherever Armenians met each other, they would generally soon take up the difference between them and the Protestants. And in this inquiry they were very earnest and sincere. They were anxious to ascertain whether they were in error or not; and with this object in view, they sat down and studied the word of God carefully, in regard to all the doctrines and ceremonies of the Armenian church. Being actuated by these honest motives in their inquiries, they were soon brought to the conviction that they had actually been in gross error; and this discovery filled them with surprise, sadness and sorrow, and with indignation against their priesthood for keeping them thus in ignorance.

Discussions were very frequent, and generally held in the night; and it was no uncommon thing for them to remain together till midnight, and often till 1 or 2 o'clock. On one occasion, a member of the church did not retire from the place of discussion till the morning had begun to dawn. In all these discussions, the Bible was the standard of ultimate appeal. They cared not for the opinions of men, or for the decrees of Councils and Synods; but their inquiry was, "What saith the Lord?" And here, doubtless, lies one

cause of the great progress of the work. It is this respect for the authority of the word of God.

These discussions and this inquiry were bringing new accessions to the Protestant community every week. The place of worship became too small, and was extended five different times into the yard, until all its available space had been taken in. The whole was rudely covered with mats and reeds. But it was exceedingly uncomfortable; in the winter the people shivered from the cold, and in the summer they were often drenched in perspiration. And yet they listened with deep interest to the preached word, in these uncomfortable circumstances, with fixedness of countenance, solemnity of expression, their eyes often filled with tears, or the tears trickling down their cheeks, with stifled sobs, and on a few occasions with some audible weeping. The whole congregation seemed, at times, melted down under the power of the truth.

The audience rose gradually to 100; then one hundred after another were added, until now there is an average of nearly 700* hearers every Sabbath; and on extraordinary occasions there have been 1,200, and even 1,500. The entire community is over 1,000; the church numbers nearly 200; in the schools there are not far from 250 pupils; in the Sabbath school about 150. There has also been a band of 15 or 20 colporters; and there are several theological students. Five of these have been licensed to preach, and three of them ordained as preachers. One of these has been ordained as a pastor over the church in Aintab, and is supported by his own church and people. Thus, within a period of about ten years, this large community and church have been gathered, with their own pastor, looking to them for his support.

What is particularly to be noticed, is the fact that these

* Letters received since these remarks were made, represent the average audience now as 800.

results have been secured, to a great extent, by the co-operation of the members of the church and congregation. As soon as a man received the truth, he felt that he was under obligations to spread it, and he at once entered on efforts to do so. Their zeal in this respect has been very marked and praiseworthy. Not unfrequently they would take their Bible under their arms, and go to the houses of Armenians; one little company in this direction, and another in that. The perseverance with which they labored for individuals has often been surprising to the missionaries. It seemed as though they never could become weary in these efforts. Thus the spirit of inquiry was constantly nourished and diffused, and new individuals were continually coming under the power of the truth. Humanly speaking, this work could not have spread so extensively as it has, had not the members, both of the congregation and the church, thus zealously lent their co-operation.

Not only in the city, but in its vicinity likewise, cheering results of the labors of this church are visible. In the year 1849 they first commenced these colporter labors, which have been continued from that time to the present. And now, as the result, we are permitted to report that in eleven different places the gospel has begun to be preached; in six of these, by regularly ordained preachers, and in the remaining ones, by licensed preachers and colporters. Of these places, four have been constituted into regular stations, occupied by American missionaries, and the remaining seven are out-stations. One of these stations is Diarbekir, where there is a large population to be reached, in the city and also in the vicinity. There is an audience of between 200 and 300; a church of about 30 members; an active spirit of inquiry in the city; several colporters are laboring in the vicinity; two out-stations are already in existence, at one of which a church will soon be formed; and the prospects of future growth are very cheering. Marash is another of these stations. Here there is an average audience of 340; a

church of about 40 members; a spirit of very extensive inquiry; one or more colporters; and the prospect in the highest degree encouraging. In fact, this is one of the most promising stations in the whole mission, and, with the continued blessing of God, great results will there be secured. Antioch, from which Paul and Barnabas issued forth on the first Foreign Mission, has also been formed into a station, with a small community and congregation. Oorfa, the ancient Ur of the Chaldees, is the fourth station, with a small church and congregation and community. Of the out-stations, Kessab is the most important, having an average congregation of 225, a church of about 70 members, a community of over 400, a preaching place connected with it having an audience of 40; and they have a native pastor, of excellent qualifications, settled over them. Killis is another out-station, with an audience of about 100, and a small church, and a very extensive spirit of inquiry. In Biredgik, on the Euphrates, there is an audience of 22; in Bitias, near Antioch, one of 35; in Adana, there is also a small church and community, with a native pastor; and in addition to these are Tarsus and Orool, where labor has been performed. In connection with these eleven places, over 1,000 hear the gospel preached on the Sabbath; and of these, about 150 are members of the church.

Now the particular fact to be noticed in this connection is, that these results have been secured mainly through the labors of these colporters. They broke up the fallow ground and prepared the way, and by their efforts created the necessity for these stations and out-stations. Though the missionaries performed some labor, yet the great burden of the toil was bestowed by these men; and had they not thus labored, neither the stations nor the out-stations could have been formed, and no such results could be reported. What a forcible illustration of the leading truth of the sermon, that every Christian is bound to make personal and individual effort for the spread of the truth!

THIRTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING

OF THE

PALESTINE MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The Thirty-seventh Annual Meeting of the Palestine Missionary Society, was held at Easton, June 17, 1857.

The public exercises commenced at eleven o'clock, A. M. A Sermon was preached by Rev. Ezekiel Russell; and Rev. Benjamin Schneider, a missionary of the Board, followed with an Address. The Report of the Treasurer was presented and accepted.

Voted, That a copy of the Sermon preached by Rev. Mr. Russell be requested for publication; also that Rev. Mr. Schneider be requested to furnish the substance of his Address to be published.

Voted, That the thanks of the Society be presented to Rev. Dr. Sheldon, and Rev. Mr. White and their people, for their hospitality, and to the choir for their aid.

Officers for the Current Year.

Gen. BENJAMIN KING, President.

Dea. JONATHAN NEWCOMB, } Vice Presidents.
Mr. HENRY W. ROBINSON, }

Rev. JONAS PERKINS, Secretary.

EBENEZER ALDEN, M. D., Treasurer.

SILAS PAINE. Esq., Auditor.

☞ The next Annual Meeting will be held at the meeting-house of the Winthrop Society, East Randolph, *on the third Wednesday in June.* Sermon by Rev. E. P. Dyer.

RECEIPTS.

Abington, First Parish, Gent. 8,50; La. 23; coll. 123,35; .	$154 85
" South " Sarah and Willie, 5; m. c. 23; coll. 90,65;	118 65
" East Parish, Gent. and La. 138,50; m. c. 20; .	158 50
Braintree, First Parish, 100; La. 51,25;	151 25
" South " Juv. Miss. So.	5 00
Bridgewater, Trin. So. Gent. and La. 16; m. c. 19; . .	35 00
" Scotland Parish, m. c. 5; coll. 10; . .	15 00
Cohasset, Evan. So. coll.	48 20
East Bridgewater, Trin. So. coll.	36 00
East and West Bridgewater, Un. So. m. c.	7 00
Easton, Evan. So. coll. 7,75; m. c. 50;	57 75
North Bridgewater, Indiv.	1 00
" " First Parish, Friend, ...	5 00
" " Porter Soc. m. c. 94,73; coll. 132,56; .	227 29
Quincy, Evan. So. La. 8,75; m. c. 7,49; friend, 5; . .	21 24
Randolph, First Parish, m. c. 45,50; Gent. 118,75; La. 47,14; s. s. 5;	216 39
" Second Parish, m. c. 31,47; La. 22,60; . .	54 07
" Winthrop " m. c. and coll. 45,02; La. 38,41;	83 43
Scituate, Cong. So. coll.	24 31
Weymouth, North Parish, coll.	77 10
" South " m. c. 46; coll. 20,07; . . .	66 07
" Union " m. c.	90 07
Weymouth and Braintree, Un. So. Young La. 15; coll. 66,17;	81 17
Legacy, Ansel Pratt, North Weymouth, ...	1,169 25
	$2,903 59

Attest, EBENEZER ALDEN, TREASURER.

VICTORY SURE.

A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

PALESTINE MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

JUNE 15, 1859.

BY

REV. FREDERIC R. ABBE.

BOSTON:
PRESS OF T. R. MARVIN & SON, 42 CONGRESS STREET.
1859.

DISCOURSE.

PSALM XXVII. 3.

THOUGH A HOST SHOULD ENCAMP AGAINST ME, MY HEART SHALL NOT FEAR: THOUGH WAR SHOULD RISE AGAINST ME, IN THIS WILL I BE CONFIDENT.

THE spirit of David, as sublimely exhibited in the text, must glow in the heart, and burn on the lips of the Christian Church, before she will sit in peace upon a conquered world. She must not fear, though hosts encamp against her; and though war after war should rise, and shake their bloody standards, and display their grim strength, yet must she ever be confident of victory.

Fearlessness draws a weapon, which the fearful arm, even in a righteous cause, can never wield. Confidence strides onward to success along a path which doubt can never tread, trampling difficulties in the dust, like a conqueror the necks of kings, and stands on the glorious height, the fortress stormed and *won*, whilst distrust is idling and trembling at the base. It quails not before the encampment of the mightiest host; and the bloodiest war will not shake its grand assurance. It sees the throne of God, no vain imagining, but filling in

truth the circuit of the heavens and earth; and, glowing with trust and love, reclines under its shadow and awaits its power. So sublime was the faith of David, which could teach his harp to glory even in the caverns of the wilderness; could give him hope in a pebble above the giant's spear, and fill his soul with the confidence of victory even in the presence of a host, and amid the direst threatenings of war. And such indeed, with yet more reason and need than David's, should be the faith of the Christian Church, in her vast commission to subdue the earth, by the Cross and the Spirit.

Faith grown up to confidence is, what the tower of Babel was not, built up to heaven, and fit to survive storm and deluge. What a sublime view from that high summit, if one were only there! How could we assuredly gather in the whole earth, and lay it at the feet of Christ! And then, descending to the plain of action, and buckling on the harness, full of the enthusiasm of the sight, with what joy and vigor should we strive to realize the heavenly vision! Would God the living Church might stand on that far height, and breathe the energy of such pure atmosphere, and kindle with the glory of a prospect so grand and godly! But now she does not look to the ends of the earth, and walk through all its borders with a faith, which gives every tribe unhesitatingly to the Lord, and knows, without a doubt, that the sceptre of Christ will be the sceptre of the world. She fears for the ark; she trembles for the throne of God. Christ indeed is mighty;

but mightier yet, she seems to feel, are the forces of sin. Strong is the eternal Word; but stronger yet, by her conduct, she seems to make her own suspicions of defeat. She is not confident of Christ, confident of her own destiny, confident of the love and promises of God. And through this weakness of faith it is, that money dribbles, and action falters, and duty sleeps. Through lack of confidence in certain victory, and a glorious issue to the sinful ages, the battle of the Lord is waged against heathen and infidel and hypocrite with so little heart, and such poor success,—poor, compared with the riches of possible and promised conquest. But we may look for new days speedily, new heavens and a new earth, when the whole Church shall truly say, and act to the word: "Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident."

Such confidence of faith in the conversion of the whole world it shall be the aim of the present discourse to inspire in us all; that, if the Spirit will, we may be more zealous and true and sacrificing in this first and greatest of Christian causes, as it was the last upon the earthly lips of Jesus.

But if this confidence be true and profitable, it must be the confidence of saints, not the confidence of fools, as in the proverb: "The fool rageth and is confident." There is, indeed, rife in the world, nay, to a degree, in the Church too, a confidence, sham as vanity itself and baseless as a dream, which is very justly feared and condemned by the good

and wise. Not such, we hope, will be the confidence of this discourse; not such will build up the Church, nor truly strengthen and embolden the soul. That confidence only is worthy the Christian and the man, and alone able, by grace, to grasp the world and subdue it to Christ, which is founded, not on wishes, nor fancies, nor guess-work, but on reason, on facts, and on the Eternal God.

I. Let us then, in the first place, consider briefly a few objective and plain reasons, forcing themselves upon us, which, besides the inherent and necessary victory at last of truth and right, plead with us, and should persuade us all, to be, not suspicious, but *confident*, whatever may rise in opposition, and threaten defeat, that "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ."

1. *Evil even will be pressed into the service.*

Beyond doubt, the nature and direct tendency of moral evil is to abolish heaven, overturn the Throne, and blot out every vestige of holiness. Even natural evil, with its own skirts pure of sin, save as the attendant or avenger thereof, whether it appear in the tempest, or in disease, or in the gentlest stroke of sorrow, in itself breathes only desolation. Nevertheless it is a fact, however wrapped in mystery till explained on high, and a fact apparent to the slightest glance, that evil is every where working on the side of truth, and righteousness, and God. The world is growing fruitful, more and more, like

a field, under the plows of misfortune, and the harrows of grief, and even under the fire and bloody fertilizing of war. One lays his heart in the grave, and out of it takes a new spirit, and a new life, in which Christ shall be mirrored on heathen shores. Some bolt of heaven shivers another's coffers; and, behold! the golden tide, covered with Bibles and missionaries, rolls away over pagan lands. Another has his bosom crushed under some great sorrow; when lo! like the bruised olive, it pours out a precious oil for the dying, or, like the smitten rock, a sparkling stream for the desert.

But gigantic evil is a more manifest and impressive agent in the sure coming of the true and universal Christendom. And gigantic indeed has been, and doubtless yet will be, the hand of evil towards the issue of the world to God. A commercial panic shakes the land, like the rush of an earthquake; and towering hopes crumble; famine wails where luxury had rioted; and the tread of ruin crushes alike cottage and marble hall. But a blessing is in its train. The nation, smitten and humbled, cries to God, and grace descends upon ten thousand circles of prayer; a new host springs up, armed for battle; and churches and seats of learning and the ends of the earth feel, and will feel more and more, this mighty impulse for Jesus. The greed of gain, the prime corruption of Anglo-Saxon blood, and the murderer of its millions, goes forth in ships of war to force reluctant commerce; but while, with bloody arguments from the cannon's mouth, or skillful

diplomacy beneath a resistless flag, it enlarges the sphere of trade, a holier work too is done, and empires vast as China, and populations countless as Japan's, are opened to the gospel. Ambitious war also, to the lips in blood and tears, has often fought for truth and God, when it thought not so: and the battle-shock of nations, many a time, has poured out purity upon the world, like thunder-clouds upon the fields of air. Our Christian liberty was born in battle. The Crimean war shattered the Moslem superstition, and wrung from the Crescent a tribute to the Cross. India has washed herself in blood; but, from the hideous bath, has risen higher among the nations, and made a noble step towards heaven. And now, while Europe quakes under the tread of imperial armies, is it too much to hope, that, when the sun shall break forth again above the scattered storm, it shall smile upon tyranny crushed, upon freedom in garlands, and upon the Bible and truth having free course, and glorified, by the banks of the Danube, on the plains of Lombardy, and under the very shadow of the Vatican? It was, moreover, the dreadful wrong of persecution, which, in the first Christian age, like a whirlwind, bore the gospel seed to the ends of the earth; which drove our Pilgrim Fathers to plant in a wilderness this tree of God, whose ripe fruit of liberty and love shall refresh the hunger of millions beyond the seas; and which, in almost every generation, by fire, and rack, and dungeon, has fertilized the Church, and, with the sword, has pruned a false luxuriance to give it the true increase of heaven.

And thus it is; and so may faith be confident, that petty and gigantic evil will be used, or overruled, by Christ for His kingdom and glory. And if there is a bit even in the jaws of Satan to this end, how much more will there be a golden bridle upon all the forces of righteousness!

2. Wherefore we may have a second source of confidence in this matter from the *certainty, that genuine holiness, the world over, will toil for it.*

Every truest soul, and every most Christ-like Church, re-enacting by the Spirit within them the everlasting decree, have resolved upon this triumph. They will rest, day nor night, no, not till Christ receive his rightful empire. Shall any heart, inflamed with love, quench all its zeal, till the same holy ardor kindle in every bosom? Shall any knee, which has felt the rapture of heavenly worship, unbend its humility, while a single fellow-knee is at the altar of any idol? Shall lips, rich with the praise, and fat with the bread of heaven, fail in the eloquence of Christ, while there is one untasting tongue? Shall a Christian neck, which knows the ecstacy of the Cross and the glory of its blood, shrink from any burden of sacrifice, while a heathen back bends under the yoke of superstition, and wears the harness of the car of death? Thus at least will it never be with the noblest and best. The thousands nearest to heaven have resolved; and, as the Lord liveth, that vow will not be dishonored. They will not cease their holy valor, nor to press the mercy-seat, nor to pour out rivers of gold,

nor to despise their lives unto the death, while a tribe is hostile to the cross,—while a single soul, on the highest mountain, or in the remotest isle, is without the knowledge of salvation and the love of Jesus.

Such Christian heroism is on earth, and such resistless vows. Victory is sure, when such determination enters the field, and will have nothing but victory. The sword is drawn, and shall know its scabbard no more, till Jesus reigns. A spirit, brighter than that which has gilded for ages the rocky sides of Thermopylæ, a spirit, nobler than that which has covered the heights of Charlestown with patriotic glory, pants and struggles in thousands of Christian bosoms. And shall it not conquer? Even unholy enterprises can prosper through an iron will, and a Cæsar triumph by burning his ships. And shall pious undertakings, sinewed with strong hearts, and grappled by faith to the arm of God, go down in disaster? Above all, shall the purpose of the world's conversion, this great modern purpose in the heart of the Church, which, in its infancy, wrought so grandly in the lives of Carey and Martyn and Brainerd and Judson, now that it kindles the Christian soul so widely, and animates a host of heroes, as resolute and undismayed, be defeated of its aim? Not while love is resistless, and prayer answered, and faith omnipotent.

3. A third ground of confidence is the *administration of God*, which, from the first, rules for this kingdom of Christ.

Since the fall, we cannot conceive of a purpose more worthy of the power, and wisdom, and love of the Almighty, than to restore a world to himself,—to repair so fearful a breach in his holy empire. Shall He rule, for its own sake, saints or rebels, it matters not? Will He support an earth like this, so fair and glorious, for sin to play its endless pranks upon, and Satan to lord it ever over innocence and truth? Shall He have a kingdom thus wrested from His sceptre, and care not for its reconquest? Shall the shout of the morning stars, which hailed its birth, but died away as the curse rolled on, never reascend over its restoration, louder and forever, into the delighted ears of the Most High? It cannot, cannot be. The energies of Divine government, as it is wise and merciful, must bend themselves to that recovery, which is nobler than preservation, grander than to create. As there is reason in the heavenly sceptre, as there is goodness on the throne of God, the first aim of His administration among the affairs of men, in every event of disaster or glory, sprung from His counsel and wrought by His arm, must be the dawn of that gladsome and triumphant day, when there shall be "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

And so the world's history, from Eden onwards, by sacred or profane pen, is full of evidence to reason, as well as faith, of a Divine hand determined to conquer, and to guide the final issue to His highest glory. Every flash of the flaming sword which shot remorse into the hearts of the sinful

pair, every drop of water that aided the deluge over the mountain-tops, every hailstone which rattled upon blasphemous hosts, and every fiery flake that kindled in the dwellings of Sodom and Gomorrah, was full of the argument and the prayer: "Thy kingdom come." And in mercy too, His wondrous dealings with Israel, His chosen, in every article of glory or disgrace, from Abram in Ur to Jesus upon Calvary, all point to a nobler chosen of the Spirit, heirs of faith, who shall inherit the earth, and to a King whose dominion of heart shall embrace the remotest tribe. And so likewise has every century since gathered about the Cross, and paid tribute to the Church of Christ,—tribute from God, in the rise and fall of empires, in the progress of liberty and light, in the wealth of discovery, in the wonders of science, and in the noblest intellects which have adorned humanity.

Thus is the past: and shall the future retrace such glorious steps? Thus hath the Almighty prevailed: and, at this vantage hour, shall the Lord of hosts be weary and disheartened? Shall this Divine plan of empire and redemption of the apostate earth, carried forward so grandly, so many ages long, now fail in the very sight of the goal of its triumph? Not while the universe is God's, and ministering angels fly, and the Spirit prompts in human hearts the battle-song of the Cross.

4. Thus far have we followed, chiefly, fact and reason; but let us now, in the last place, confirm our confidence, never to be shaken, by searching

the holier fields of revelation. Reason is noble; facts are strong: but nobler infinitely, infinitely stronger, is the word of God. Reason may wander; facts may be misjudged: but the Holy One cannot err, His promise cannot fail. But when all combine; when reason is substantiated, and facts confirmed, by the inspired voice; the thing itself, in open and completed presence, should not make us more inflexibly confident.

And such a combination it is, which arrays itself against our unbelief, and demands a confidence of the world's issue to Christ. Let the Bible complete the victory. And as in battle, when the common forces have struggled long, and success is in the balance, the corps of reserve, some imperial guard, or bravest veterans in arms, are hurled upon the foe to ensure and perfect the triumph; so now may these imperial Scriptures, clad in celestial light and armed from God, kept back till they seem to struggle for the field, sweep over all our souls, and bind every remaining doubt in captivity to the universal reign of Jesus. Not an argument, not an assertion, not an inference has been presented, but can be confirmed by many a celestial voice sounding out of the holy oracles. Every decree that "the wrath of man shall praise" the Lord; every promise to faithful prayer and godly effort; every sublime word from the Throne, "I am God, and there is none else; my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," points us onward assuredly to the kingdom of Christ. But mingling with them all, higher

and grander yet, is many a positive promise and prophecy of the glorious day. Hear the voice of the Father: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Listen to the prophetic Spirit, which searcheth all things, even the deep things of God: "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him." Behold with Daniel the heavenly vision, when he saw, and lo, "one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him." And now at last, with John, when all is accomplished, hear the "great voices in heaven," and listen, till your souls catch the halleluiah, saying: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever."

II. Such then, my brethren, is the train of reasons, from the reluctant hand of evil to the determined sceptre of God, which plead for our faith, in full assurance of the world's conversion. Such is the broad foundation on which the Church, and every Christian soul, should build her confidence, stronger than Gibraltar, against every assault of doubt, that, whatever host may encamp against

her, whatever war may arise, she will prevail; the victory will be with Jesus to the ends of the earth. And were it thus, as it should be, what grand, what swift results in the birth of nations, yearly, daily, would astonish hell and enrapture the hosts above! Let us then, if our imagination can stretch so high, consider now, very briefly, something of the effect, if the entire church were filled with this lofty spirit of confidence for Christ.

True confidence is not, as some would imagine, the nurse of sloth and the mother of cowards: it is rather the noble parent of valor and action. It is not an upholsterer of easy chairs and couches of down; but a maker of arms, of spurs, and of banners. It does not, in certainty of the issue, leave the field for others to win; but pants to have a hand in the victory, and to hasten its hour. It does not believe in a lazy leaning upon God; but, while it looks upward only for success, teaches the value of means, and makes every man feel that himself is a real and important part of the Divine plan. It will not crown itself with pride, as though the creature were the lord of fortune; but, in its highest hopes, amid the noblest sacrifice and toil, if it be true, is confident only of the Almighty, and of self through Him.

Whatever is otherwise, whatever engenders those base results, is doubt rather than confidence; or, if confidence at all, is only the groundless confidence of fools. The object may not, indeed, secure one's interest enough to make

him either fearful or confident: he may be infidel, or unconcerned which way the issue turn. But when it is esteemed of moment, as every matter of God and the soul should be, and does not call forth every manly, active virtue, whatever the cause, it is not surely by reason of overmuch faith. Does the farmer, confident of a harvest, idle the spring away in watching the clouds and longing for corn? Does the sailor, confident of his port, furl his sails when the breeze is fresh, or burn his charts amid dangerous rocks? And will the Christian, confident of heaven and Christ, squander life with follies, or fail to tread the active course of godliness? The hypocrite's hope, indeed, shall perish, and the hope of the fool; but their confidence is only in the world, and in their lusts. The disciple of election, who trusts in its inevitable choices to pursue his sinful pleasures, is not confident of Christ and salvation, as a personal end, but of this, which any simpleton may know as well, that whatever will be, will be.

Thus infidelity may ruin in the guise of confidence, and madness trick itself out for hell in the colors of assurance. But it is doubt,—faithless, strange, and shameful doubt, which, above all, fetters the steps of Christian progress, blights the promise of holy deeds, quenches the fire of godly zeal, and hinders the Gospel successes, here and on pagan shores. It is especially active in opposition to the conversion of the world, to this spiritual baptism of the whole globe. Such a glorious day

is too bright, such a vast hope is too wonderful, for the ordinary faith. The poisonous scepticism works deeper than we are aware, and its death is in the heart of many a one, whose cheek seems glowing with the holiest health. Do Christian means give scantily to this grand object; and is it not because, deep in the soul, farther than avarice reaches, there is a suspicion, that it is little better than pouring gold into the sea, or sowing wheat on icebergs? Does Christian prayer plead faintly for these wild and unbaptized millions; and is it not because, in the secret chamber of belief, the thought rules, that, abandoned to their shamelessness, the ear of heaven is dull, and the arm of God restrained, towards the hearts and homes of heathendom? Does Christian zeal shrink from the pagan shore, and Christian sacrifice die but rarely there; and is it not because, deeper than the root of home and patriotic selfishness, there is a lurking confidence in idolatry above the Cross, a harbored infidelity, that Christ shall be victorious to the earth's remotest bounds?

But when a holy confidence shall sweep away every vestige of this deadly unbelief; when trust shall root like the oak in the word and strength and glory of Immanuel,—what a change! What a ferment of godliness and Christ in all the Church! What courage! What sacrifice! What Apostolic toil for the world's salvation! How grand,—the whole Church drinking the cup of duty to the dregs, and on the very summit of its high privi-

lege of prayer and battle for the kingdom of Jesus! Such may she be, such should she be, by the unbending confidence of faith.

Has not faith, in this her highest mood of trust, thus full of God, power to work so gloriously? Shall confidence in genius and destiny give the palm to bloody ambition? Shall confidence in the rights of liberty win the battle-field for a nobler patriotism? Shall even political strife turn to success, and the scale weigh out honor and riches for the party, which can inspire the strongest confidence, that victory is ready and eager to perch upon their banner? And shall not the Church of Christ, by a holier and mightier confidence, wrought to enthusiasm and replete with God, soon cover every land with her bright ensigns of conquest, and, everywhere and forever, win swiftly her peaceful reign amid the ruins of idolatry, and above the eternal dust of every superstition? Surely the heavenly confidence shall prosper as the earthly; yea, this may fail, but that, as God is true, shall never.

Already I seem to see the bright, auspicious day in all its glory. The bride is confident of her Beloved; the Church knows that her Redeemer liveth. She sees her King upon His holy hill of Zion, and believes that He has asked, and will receive, "the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession." Trembling doubt gives place to strong assurance, and feeble heart to hearty courage. The prayer of

wrestling faith, so skillful to call down the arm of the Almighty, besieges the Throne, from day to day, from countless tongues. The coffers of hoarded wealth are shivered to atoms, and the treasury of righteousness overflows with uncankered gold. A host, burning with the name of Jesus, and ready for sacrifice, spring to the field in holy emulation, and cover the earth with the warriors of God. Onward, and ever brighter, like the rising sun, hastens the glory of Christ. Nations are born in a day. New hosannahs hourly roll through the heavens. And soon, how soon! in the high noon of triumph, is enthroned the Sun of righteousness, shedding upon the whole world, without a vestige of night, His cloudless and celestial beams of peace, and holiness, and love.

What heart in this assembly does not pant for such an hour, and will not strive to be a part in its coming? Let us prepare then, even in this solemn hour of our worship. Let us overturn the perfidious strength of doubt. Let us, though a host should encamp against us, fear not, and, though war should rise, be confident of the Gospel and of Christ. Let us consider well this wonderful impressment of evil even in the service of God. Let us study the missionary history, and be ennobled by the deeds, the hopes, and the vows of determined thousands,—yea, of the martyr heroes, whose hands are red with battle, or whose graves now glorify the heathen sod. Let us stretch back through the past, and, from the beginning, behold the Eternal treading

through the ages, and ordering His infinite events to this great consummation. Let us rest upon the bosom of our God, and, from his own lips, hear the blessed promises, which must be fulfilled in the kingdom of Christ. Full of strength and joy and courage, let us then pray and toil, let us spend and be spent, let us fight and die, in full confidence of a glorious issue.

"Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

"Let every creature rise and bring
Peculiar honors to our King:
Angels descend with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud Amen."

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

The Palestine Missionary Society was organized June 20, 1821. The occasion of its formation was the financial exigency of the Parent Society, which had been entertaining the design of enlarging their mission in Palestine and the circumjacent region, but had not the requisite funds. Under the direction of the Board, Mr. Daniel Temple, who had offered himself as a missionary for Palestine, visited the churches in this section of the State, and his appeals in behalf of the Board were specially successful. Aware of the interest awakened in the churches, Rev. Samuel W. Colburn, of East Abington, suggested to several of his brethren the formation of a Society to sustain Mr. Temple in his contemplated mission. A meeting was accordingly notified, and several gentlemen of Weymouth, and other towns in the vicinity, met at Rev. William Tyler's meeting-house, South Weymouth, on the 20th of June, 1821, to consider the expediency of the proposed measure. The meeting was opened with prayer by Rev. R. S. Storrs, and the object of the meeting was explained and recommended by an address to the assembly by Rev. Mr. Colburn. The draft of a constitution was presented by Rev. Seth Chapin, of Hanover, which, after deliberation and some amendment, was unanimously adopted.

The following officers were then chosen:

ELIPHALET LOUD, Esq., *President.*
Rev. ABEL RICHMOND, } *Vice Presidents.*
Mr. SETH HUNT, }
Rev. JONAS PERKINS, *Secretary.*
EBENEZER ALDEN, M. D., *Treasurer.*
Mr. SILAS PAINE, *Auditor.*

From the origin of the Society to the present time, the officers have been as follows:

Presidents.	Elected.
ELIPHALET LOUD, Esq.	June 21, 1821.
Hon. CHRISTOPHER WEBB,	June 21, 1826.
Rev. DANIEL THOMAS,	June 17, 1840.
Gen. BENJAMIN KING,	June 16, 1847.
HENRY W. ROBINSON, Esq.	June 16, 1858.

Vice Presidents.	Elected.
Rev. ABEL RICHMOND,	June 21, 1821.
Mr. SETH HUNT,	June 21, 1821.
Dea. MORTON EDDY,	June 20, 1827.
Rev. DANIEL THOMAS,	June 21, 1837.
JOSIAH W. KINGMAN, Esq.	June 17, 1840.
Dea. JONATHAN NEWCOMB,	June 20, 1849.
HENRY W. ROBINSON, Esq.	June 20, 1855.
E. N. HOLBROOK, Esq.	June 16, 1858.
SAMUEL BLAKE, Esq.	June 16, 1858.

Secretary.	
Rev. JONAS PERKINS.	June 20, 1821.

Treasurer.	
EBENEZER ALDEN, M. D.	June 20, 1821.

Auditor.	
SILAS PAINE, Esq.	June 20, 1821.

Amount of funds raised by the Society, $63,251 80.

ANNUAL MEETING.

THE Thirty-ninth Annual Meeting of the PALESTINE MISSIONARY SOCIETY, was held at the meeting-house of the Second Parish, Weymouth, June 15, 1859, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

The following officers were elected for the current year:

HENRY W. ROBINSON, ESQ., *President.*
E. N. HOLBROOK, ESQ. } *Vice Presidents.*
SAMUEL BLAKE, ESQ. }
REV. JONAS PERKINS, D. D., *Secretary.*
EBENEZER ALDEN, M. D., *Treasurer.*
SILAS PAINE, ESQ., *Auditor.*

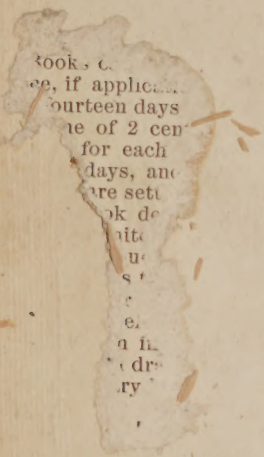
Voted, That the next Annual Meeting be held at Campello, in Rev. Mr. Wood's meeting-house; and that Rev. CHARLES L. MILLS be the preacher.

Voted, To adjourn, to attend public worship. At 11 o'clock, A. M., a Sermon was preached by Rev. FREDERIC R. ABBE, the Treasurer's Report presented, and an Address made by Rev. JUSTIN PERKINS, D. D., as a deputation from the Board.

Voted, That the thanks of the Society be given to Rev. Mr. ABBE, and that a copy of the Sermon preached by him be requested for publication by the Treasurer and Secretary, and that a Historical Statement of the origin and progress of the Society be appended.

Voted, That the thanks of the Society be given to Rev. Dr. PERKINS, for his appropriate and interesting Address. Also, to Rev. Mr. TERRY and his people, for their hospitality on the occasion.

RECEIPTS.

Abington, First Parish, Gent. 119; La. 51,71; m. c. 135,68;	$306 39
South " Gent. 102; La. 60; m. c. 12;	174 00
East " Gent. and La. 129; m. c. 37;	166 00
Braintree, First " La. 45,25; m. c. 118,50;	163 75
South " Friend,	2 00
Braintree and *Weymouth*, Union So. coll. 27; m. c. 85,18;	112 18
Bridgewater, Trin. So. coll. 14; do. 38,67; m. c. 10,68;	63 35
Scotland Par. m. c.	11 00
East Bridgewater, Trin. So. coll.	33 00
East and *West Bridgewater*, Union So.	3 00
Easton, Gent. and La.	75 00
Hanover, Rev. Joel Mann,	100 00
North Bridgewater, First Par. L. E. 2; Gent. and La. 73;	75 00
Porter So. coll. and m. c.	278 00
Campello, coll.	39 45
Quincy, Evan. So. Gent. and La. 61; m. c. 17;	78 00
Randolph, First Par. Gent. 119,25; La. 46,48; s. s. 8,96; m. c. 125,80;	300 49
East " Gent. 21; La. 17,14; Yo. La. 10,65; m. c. 41,83;	90 62
Winthrop Par. Gent. 41,25; La. 31,55; m. c. 100,05;	172 85
Scituate, North,	13 36
Weymouth, North Par. Gent. and La. 88,35; m. c. 68,21;	156 56
South " Gent. and La. 100,16; m. c. 50,98;	151 14
South, Union So. m. c.	114 84
Legacy, Mr. Ansel Pratt, *North Weymouth*,	1,000 00
	$3,679 98

EBENEZER ALDEN, Treasurer.